

OCTOBER ATLANTIC

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VOLUME 182 1948 NUMBER 4

The Atlantic Report on the World Today

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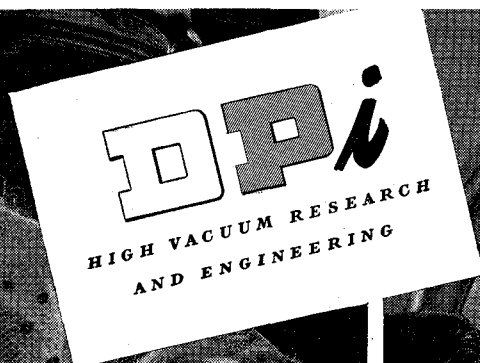
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THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, October, 1948, Vol. 182, No. 4. Published monthly. Publication Office, 10 Ferry Street, Concord, N.H. Editorial and General Offices, 8 Arlington St., Boston 16, Mass. 50 cents a copy, \$6.00 a year. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage. Entered as second-class matter July 15, 1918, at the Post Office at Concord, N.H., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Printed in the U.S.A. by Rumford Press, Concord, N.H. Copyright 1948, by The Atlantic Monthly Company. All rights, including translation into other languages, reserved by the Publisher in the United States, Great Britain, Mexico, and all countries participating in the International Copyright Convention and the Pan-American Copyright Convention.



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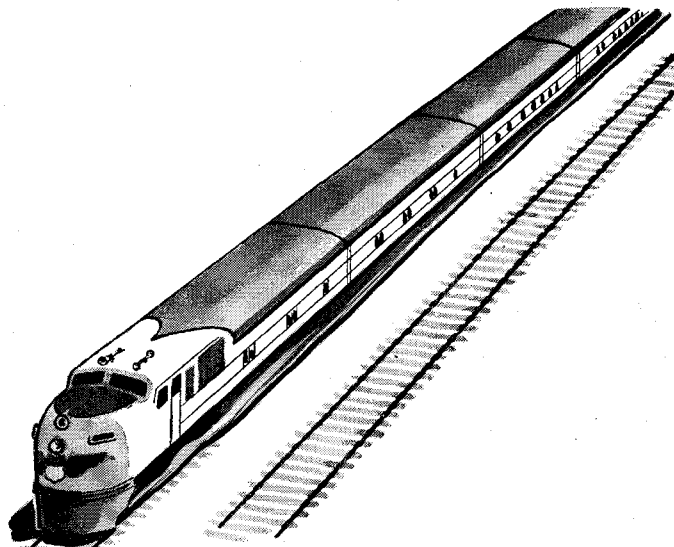
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THE ATLANTIC REPORT

on the World today

London

DURING the next year and a half or more, domestic politics in Britain are likely to be dominated by the Battle of Iron and Steel. Only a cataclysm like war could divert the political parties from the coming struggle over the British Labor Government's decision to nationalize the steel industry.

Other fields of private enterprise, socialized in the first three years of Labor rule, fall into a different category. British Conservatives offered merely a shadow resistance to nationalization of the Bank of England, coal, railways, civil aviation, electricity, gas, cables and wireless.

In Continental Europe institutions like railroads and the telegraph system were long ago transferred to state possession by governments without a trace of socialism in their outlook. In varying degrees, services now nationalized in Britain recall the "gas and water" socialism which Fabian reformers were espousing about half a century ago. In a broader sense, they are all public utilities. Steel is the only manufacturing industry which Labor has set out to socialize.

Railroads and some other national undertakings which the state has absorbed possess a monolithic character which contrasts with the diversified bits and pieces which make up the steel industry. All sorts of machinery production are tied to steel. So is the output of thousands of articles with steel components — articles ranging from tractors, munitions, and typewriters to bicycles. The steel industry proper is usually inseparable from its finishing subsidiaries. To bring most or all metal and engineering plants under the roof of a National Steel Board, say Conservative critics, would exceed the mandate which voters gave the Labor Party.

There is another difference between nationalizing steel and, say, the coal fields. Under private ownership British steel manufacture has been advancing in efficiency and volume. This compares with the steady decline and neglect of coal output under its former capitalist structure. Many British anti-socialists have publicly recognized that private enterprise failed miserably in Britain's coal mines.

The British Conservative Party has said that if it is returned to office, it will abstain from denationalizing all those enterprises which the Labor Government has so far socialized. When it comes to iron and steel, however, not only the big steel interests and the Tories but British capitalists as a whole are ready to fight, and they enjoy strong support in the United States.

Until now the United States has refrained from intervening in London on this issue. Washington's formal attitude is that this is a British domestic question. In private conversation, though, highly placed American representatives have warned that Congress may decline to share this benign view. Many American legislators and government leaders hold that nationalization would shackle Britain's rising steel production and impede the nation's convalescence. An influential American in the ERP organization expressed the personal opinion that if the British proceed to socialize steel, Congress will cut several hundred million dollars off next year's Marshall Aid appropriation.

Boom in steel

The main argument of Conservatives opposed to nationalization of steel is that the privately owned steel industry in Britain is booming and that handing it over to the state now would be catastrophic.



The Atlantic Report on London



Every ton of steel is essential for the British export push, for recovery inside Britain, and for Western Europe's comeback. Why tinker with doctrinaire socialism in a field where private capitalism is breaking all records for output?

At the annual shareholders' meeting of the big British steel firm, Richard Thomas and Baldwins, the chairman, E. H. Lever, declared: "Our problems will not be solved by ruthless pursuit of political ideologies. It's extraordinary that at a time when the British iron and steel industry is acquitting itself so well it is apparently the intention of His Majesty's Government to introduce some form of nationalization during the lifetime of the present Parliament. Faced, as this country is, with the problem of survival, this is not the time to run even the slightest risk of friction in the working of a smooth-running machine."

When industrialists like Mr. Lever defend the private steel industry, they are fighting for the citadel of capitalism. For if steel goes, they ask, what comes next? Would the giant Imperial Chemical Industries survive? Where is there a comparable dike against state socialism, if the steel dam is pierced?

Why nationalize steel?

Despite formidable opposition, the Government intends in November to lay before the House of Commons the bill for transferring the iron and steel industry to public ownership. Steel nationalization will probably become law in January or February, 1950. Between then and May, 1950, when the next British general election is expected, the Government plans to put the law into operation. The speeded timetable is designed to make it more difficult for the Conservatives to repeal the steel socialization act, if they should be victors at the polls and regain power. Yet an attempt by a future Tory cabinet to revoke the law and hand back steel to private ownership is not to be ruled out.

Why, then, has the Labor Government decided to storm this strong point of British capitalism? Steel production is running about one third above the pre-war rate, but the Government believes it could do much better. Moreover, Labor doubts that this industry will ever fulfill its real mission while being conducted for private profit.

True, in May, 1946, the British Iron and Steel Federation published a development plan. At a cost of 675 million dollars (168 million pounds), new blast furnaces and steelworks were to be built in the

following eight years. Leftists scoffed at what they considered the deathbed repentance of an industry over which the sword of socialism is dangling. Commenting on the Federation's expansion project, a Labor member of Parliament, Ian Mikardo, wrote: "In the past, schemes of capital development have been abandoned in a panic at the first whisper of recession, and we've no guarantee that that wouldn't happen again if the choice were left to the same people."

Yet even Labor critics acknowledged the technical excellence of some of the owners' proposals. What they attacked was the plan's scale. Production in 1948 has been at a rate close to 15 million tons a year. In his pamphlet "Why Nationalize Steel?" G. D. H. Cole, the Labor economist, denounced the Federation's plan for aiming at a total output capacity of only 16 million tons in 1954 and an annual production of about 15.5 million tons. Professor Cole assailed this target as totally inadequate, considering the arrears of unsatisfied demand accumulated during the war, the need for steel to rebuild Britain and re-equip British industry, and the quest for a vast expansion of exports. The plan allowed for home consumption in 1954 only 1.5 million tons more than were consumed in 1937.

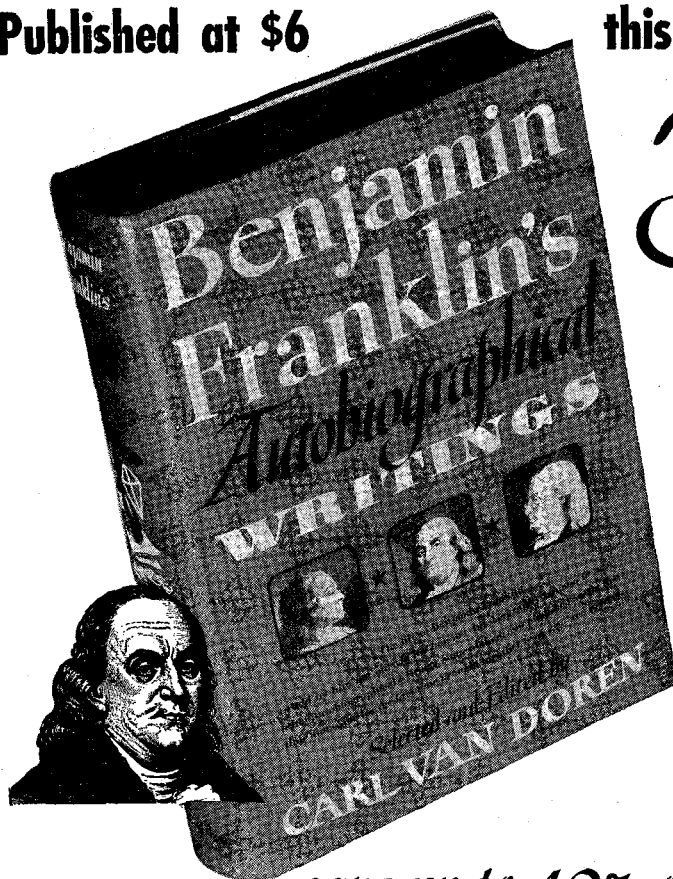
If there is truth in the charge that the steel masters are aiming their production sights far too low, this would gravely impede Britain's export drive. The following figures illustrate the importance of home steel production to British sales abroad: in 1947, exports of all United Kingdom products amounted to 4548 million dollars; of this total, 2064 million dollars represented iron and steel, machinery, and other articles made wholly or partly of steel.

Lower production, higher profits

The principal charge leveled at the steel industry by its critics is that it has tended to be a restrictive monopoly. Admittedly, British steel production increased in the 1930's, mounting from 7 million tons in 1933 to 13 million in 1937. But this rise in output was accompanied by an actual drop in exports over a long period. By 1937 Britain's total steel exports were only 2.7 million tons, compared with nearly 3.8 million in 1913. Safe behind a high tariff wall and sheltered by their cartel with German and other European producers, the British trailed on the world market. Concentrating on sales at home, their exports went mainly to the Empire, which was earmarked for Britain under the cartel agreement.

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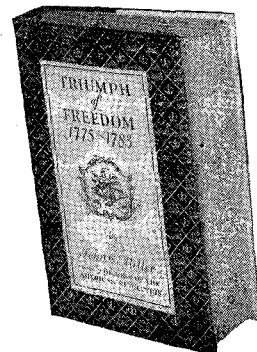
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The Atlantic Report on London



Britain could ill afford to lag in steel exports. The entire British economy relies very largely on marketing capital goods abroad. Undeniably, the British steel industry failed to keep pace with a growing world demand. The Labor Government argues that, eager for higher profits, the steelmakers restricted their productive capacity in order to bolster monopoly prices.

While world prices tobogganed all along the line after the 1929 crash, the price of British steel products was at first maintained and then advanced well above the 1929 level. This pricing policy hampered many British exports, for the cost of steel affects the price of most things Britain makes and sells.

Wanted: more steel for export

The advancing price of steel is now becoming an even more acute problem for Britain. With the first signs that the sellers' market is yielding to a buyers' market, it will be absolutely essential for the British to hold down their export prices to a competitive scale. To gain and keep a bigger slice of the world market, Britain must enlarge its steel output. It must reckon with brisker U.S. rivalry, with Germany's return as a great steel producer, and with growing competition from France and other steelmaking nations. Expansion of productive capacity is the remedy. But it is always tempting, from the private shareholders' standpoint, to keep capital costs low by renouncing construction of plant which may be partly idle during a trade lull.

This is the primary motive for Labor's decision to nationalize steel. As Cole puts it: "Steel is a key industry. Its pricing policies affect the fortunes of many other industries, including those on which the long-run success of Britain as an exporter chiefly depends. It has a natural strong tendency towards monopoly. The firms are large and few, and because of the high cost of plant construction the entry of new competitors is extremely difficult or, in many branches, impossible without assent of firms already in the field.

"It is an industry in which, because of technical conditions, it pays the profit-seeking firms best to keep total productive capacity down as near as possible to the *minimum* level of expected demand, and to maintain high prices rather than pass on the benefit of technical economies to the consumers. Finally, because of its few firms and its tendency to monopolistic organization it can easily enter into restrictive international agreements with steel pro-

ducers of other countries, and thus produce conditions of scarcity and high prices over a wider field."

It appears established that steel industrialists in Britain also resisted extension of productive capacity during the war, because they were anxious to avoid being saddled in post-war years with plant which might be unprofitable. They chose to import United States steel.

Too much monopoly

Labor has an answer, too, to the antisocialist protest that, unlike the unified coal mines, steel production is too intermingled with the engineering and metal trades to lend itself to state ownership. Iron, steel, and much engineering output is in comparatively few hands. A few dozen businessmen control the six big steel concerns and, through interlocking directorships, many lesser companies. Mr. Mikardo has pointed out, for instance, that 463,000 tons of heavy rails were manufactured in eleven plants in 1937, whereas it is now proposed to produce 650,000 tons in only four plants. Of building and domestic castings, he says three fifths of the total output in a hundred factories belongs to only three ownership groups.

To its economic reasons, Labor adds the social and moral contention that the steel business must be removed from private hands because of the marriage of steel and armaments. The indecency of harvesting profits from weapons of death has often been underlined by socialists, pacifists, and liberals. Labor further holds that leaders of the steel industry forfeited public trust by sharing and exchanging secret patents and supplies with potential enemies, even on the verge of war. They cite American and British dealings with Germany and Japan right into 1939.

Leftists usually ignore the fact, however, that nationalization itself is not necessarily a guarantee against the liaison between steel and war. An aggressive state which owns or controls the nation's steel industry is easily capable, as Hitler showed, of abusing that power.

If steel manufacture becomes a state monopoly, runs British Labor's argument, it will no longer be conducted for profit. Britain has an insatiable need for capital equipment both for export and for modernizing the country's outworn, antiquated production apparatus. A nationalized steel industry, say Attlee, Cripps & Co., would rid itself of restrictive practices and expand, regardless of dividends.

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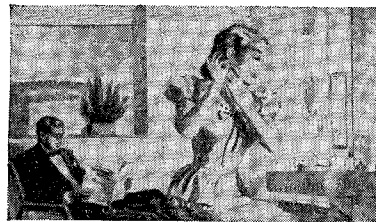
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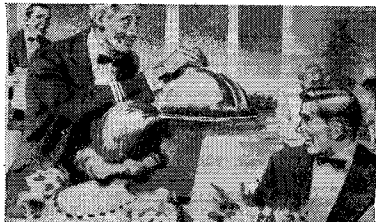
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The Philippines

WHEN General MacArthur waded ashore on the east coast of Leyte on October 20, 1944, a brown-skinned Filipino knelt and kissed his hand. Fifteen million other Filipinos soon went wild with joy. Their fingers raised in the inevitable "V," toothless old men, naked urchins, and comely dark-haired girls watched our jeeps rush by and called after them, "Victory, Joe!" It was a simple, heart-warming welcome they extended to us — a contrast to the grim-faced reception the British met in Burma, the Dutch in Indonesia, and the French in Indo-China.

The reservoir of good will we had built up in the Islands proved a sound investment during the war, but the war was hardly over when many Filipinos were comparing our occupation to that of the Japs, were charging Commissioner McNutt and U.S. businessmen with meddling in the Philippine presidential election, and were denouncing our Bell Trade Act as "an instance of a big power shamelessly trying to browbeat a weak people into economic slavery."

Where American sympathies lay in the Islands' first post-war election was no secret. While leftist organizations like the Hukbalahap (People's Anti-Japanese Army), the Peasants Party (PKM), and the CLO (the Philippine CIO) backed incumbent President Osmeña, opposition candidate Manuel Roxas reassuringly declared that he and his Liberal Party had "no suspicions against American capital or American businessmen." Commissioner McNutt warned U.S. officials to adhere to a strictly hands-off policy in the election, but with American and Philippine commercial and personal interests intertwined through almost fifty years of peace and war, our influence naturally made itself felt.

Roxas was most vulnerable on the score of his having served in the Jap puppet regime — Secretary Ickes had warned that the U.S. would send no aid unless the Philippine government was cleansed of collaborators. But Roxas's collaboration became no real political liability when just before the election Mr. McNutt announced that U.S. aid would be forthcoming regardless of who won the campaign.

Aid was what the Filipinos needed. Before the war the total assessed value of the Philippines was estimated at two and one-half billion dollars. The estimated war damage, at pre-war replacement and repair costs, was about one billion dollars. President Roosevelt had promised the Filipinos full restitution for war damages, but as late as March, 1946, not a dollar of U.S. relief money had entered the Islands. With President Osmeña apparently impotent, Roxas assured voters he could get 500 million dollars from the U.S. When Congress finally voted American aid and President Truman signed the bill — just one week after Roxas's election — Filipinos generally were convinced that they had picked the man Americans wanted.

The Republic gets started

That the Republic has become a going concern can no longer be doubted. It has certainly made a good start cleaning up rubble and getting business under way, but as yet there are few signs that it is cutting out the unhealthy remains of the Islands' pre-war semifeudal economic structure. High hopes were held when President Roxas announced plans for a diversified agricultural economy, for land reform, industrialization, and social security, but so far the Filipino peasants and workers have seen only token instances of the program's materializing.

The present Liberal Party administration understandably shies away from government planning of a "socialistic" sort for fear it will offend not only its backers at home but a free-enterprise-minded U.S. Congress. The situation is not without parallels. Witness the problem of De Gasperi in Italy and that of Sophoulis in Greece.

Agrarian radicals rebel

For two years the sixty-four-dollar question in the Philippines has been how to handle the agrarian radicals in Central Luzon who have set up what amounts to a government within a government. Over one hundred thousand strong, they have defied the federal government, established their own schools, courts, and legislative bodies, collected their own taxes, and fought more than one hundred armed skirmishes with government forces. Until their demands for progressive social legislation

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The Atlantic Report *on the Philippines*



were met they refused to surrender their arms. Meanwhile production has been paralyzed and badly needed rice crops have rotted in the fields.

Exasperated beyond endurance and worried by foreign investors who were holding off in droves, President Roxas in March finally outlawed Luis Taruc's Huks and the PKM (Peasants Party) and ordered an all-out military offensive against them. But neither the new repressive measures nor his declaration that the malcontents were "Communist bandits" helped to quiet things or solve any of the fundamental agrarian problems.

In April Roxas died suddenly of a heart attack. Vice-President Elpidio Quirino, who succeeded him, changed administration policy in one bold stroke. First Quirino entered Huk territory, talked with Taruc, and convinced him of the government's good faith. Then he issued a proclamation granting unconditional amnesty to all Huks and PKM members and announcing that "agrarian reforms shall be instituted by a more equitable distribution of land to the peasantry." Taruc in turn pledged to the government his personal loyalty and that of his followers, and agreed to a total arms surrender.

Administration die-hards accuse President Quirino of capitulating to Taruc just when "rebel" fortunes were at their lowest ebb, and a few of Taruc's lieutenants, who are still highly skeptical of the government's good faith, prefer to remain in hiding. But the ice has been broken, both sides have saved face, and a real chance now exists for a solution to the Islands' pressing agrarian problem.

Dumping ground for U.S. goods?

To get their 620 million dollars in damages under the Philippine Rehabilitation Act, Filipinos had to agree to take along with it the highly controversial Bell Trade Act. This Act, equitable on the surface, establishes free trade between the U.S. and the Philippines until 1954, after which an annual increase in duty is to be made until, in 1974, full American duties will be paid. Under the provisions of the Act, however, American goods now enter the Islands in unlimited quantities, whereas Filipino exports to the U.S. are rigidly restricted.

Today the Islands are destitute of consumer goods, and since the Act discourages Philippine manufacturers from competing with American-made products, there is real danger that in the free-trade years ahead U.S. exporters will use the Philippine market as a dumping ground for their surplus goods. In this event, hopes for a genuine

native industrialization — which is the only permanent solution to the Islands' economic problems — will go down the drain.

The section of the Act which hurts Filipinos most is the parity provision, which the Philippine Lawyers Guild calls "shockingly humiliating." It states in part that the "natural resources of the Philippines, and the operation of public utilities, shall, if open to any person, be open to citizens of the United States." Filipinos of course have no such reciprocal rights in the U.S.

The Philippine press calls the Act "one of the biggest frauds in American political history, the pieces of silver that would deliver the Philippine economy into the hands of a few American imperialists." This is a bit shrill. But it stands to reason that the Act with its quota system makes for an unhealthy type of U.S. export trade, belies our professed anxiety to reduce world trade barriers, weakens our international bargaining position, tends to perpetuate a backward economy in the Islands, and will in the end be bad business for both Filipinos and Americans.

The world situation and the American mood being what they are today, it will take Filipino leadership which is honest, intelligent, and above all tough, to tackle the fundamental problems which bedevil the Republic. Just where that leadership will come from is hard to see.

The one Filipino leader who stands above the present political confusion is General Carlos P. Romulo, Philippine delegate to the United Nations. Romulo fits solidly with all strata of Philippine society, and his fortunate isolation from current domestic conflicts makes him the logical man to fill the void left by Roxas's death. But Romulo shows no indication that he would be willing to swap his present job in New York for one at home.

Man of the moment: José P. Laurel

The shadow of José P. Laurel has been hanging over the Philippine political scene ever since the Japanese surrender. A Yale graduate and a former Supreme Court justice, he is no newcomer to Philippine voters. Before the war he frankly applauded the Japanese government's aims and urged Filipinos to join the Co-prosperity Sphere. When the Japs arrived on Luzon, he served as President of the puppet republic. Cleared of collaboration charges by the Roxas government's general amnesty order, he has declared himself a candidate for President in the 1949 elections.

In recent months the Liberal Party has shown divisive tendencies, and now that strong man Roxas is gone, Laurel expects many of the splinter groups to declare for him. Most landlords would have preferred him to Roxas in 1946, and if President Quirino is unable to pacify agrarian elements in Central Luzon and Mindanao, Laurel counts on their support. The Church has no objection to him, and merchants who now visualize a rebuilt Japan realize that he would make an excellent contact man for them with Japanese industry.

What stand leftist groups like the CLO, PKM, and Huk will finally take is hard to predict. Laurel, who has always waved the "Asia for Asiatics" banner, is as anti-American as ever and denounces the Bell Trade Act in language as colorful as that of Luis Taruc. With no candidate of their own to back, Filipino leftists, if they are convinced they can get nothing out of the present administration, may well make a deal with Laurel.

Along with the Bell Trade Act, Laurel condemns the presence of U.S. military bases in the Islands, and in so doing evokes enthusiastic applause. Filipinos do not relish the possibility of being caught in a giant Soviet-American pincer, and the thought of their cities and rice fields being used again as a battlefield is to them very frightening.

The U.S. on trial

Both the young Philippine Republic and the United States are on trial in the Far East. For nearly fifty years the Philippine Islands flew the American flag, and then on our Independence Day, 1946, while the peoples of East Asia watched and applauded, we made them a free state.

But today these peoples are wondering whether their applause was premature, whether the United States will really be equal to the sacrifice involved in surrendering authority and economic advantage in the Philippines. They are ripe to be persuaded by native extremists, both left and right, that American freedom pays off in privileges for Americans but not in rights for Asiatics. To retain their good will we shall have to convince these peoples, many of whom are now groping for new forms of government, that our brand of democracy means exactly what it says.

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DESPITE the bitterness between the Democratic and Republican Parties, bipartisan agreement on the basic principles of foreign policy thus far remains undisturbed, thanks to Governor Dewey and Senator Vandenberg. Both have withstood temptation to criticize the Administration policy, although the Governor sang a dangerous solo on the subject of the Italian colonies. Some Republicans have complained, "The Administration seems to act as if it had a blank check from us." But, except for this private muttering, they have been loyal to their bargain.

Governor Dewey made it plain that there were two pieces of legislation needing enactment at the special session: one was an improved bill admitting displaced persons; the other, the loan to the United Nations. Only the latter got through.

Senator Vandenberg and his Republican colleagues were censured because this measure failed of passage at the regular session. But the fact is that the Senator had pleaded in vain with the State Department to get at least a token contribution from the other member nations. For he has always to keep in mind the need of a case for the Senate. The State Department, however, ignored the plea: the loan, in consequence, got a cold shoulder, and it was put through the special session only by the joint effort of Governor Dewey and Senator Vandenberg.

Who decides our German policy?

The situation in Berlin arose out of the June decisions of the Six Powers. No Republican was included in this important negotiation. The Republican leadership knew in a vague way that the Western powers intended to take measures for the closer integration of their zones, but there was no mention of a German government, nor of the introduction of the West mark in Berlin. It was only after the fat was in the fire that the State Department invited John Foster Dulles to sit in on the departmental conferences.

In this instance perhaps the fault does not lie entirely with the State Department. It has sometimes seemed that where Germany is concerned the State Department has been on the outside looking in.

Control in Germany is exercised by the Army Department, and the Army Department's proconsul is General Lucius D. Clay, a good administrator, who has been virtually independent in handling affairs of the Western zone.

Clay is a gifted but a somewhat curious man, with a penchant for tantrums, especially on the "telecom." Because he has been a difficult man to handle he has been left pretty much alone. Those who cross him earn his enmity, as, for instance, the French, and he can think only in terms of "my Germans" instead of the whole European community. "Localitis" is the commonest affliction of administrators, and Secretary Marshall once said he, who had always warned his subordinates against it, contracted it when he was in China.

The one-man show in Berlin meant that there was no chance of developing a German policy in the State Department, though, in the final analysis, the State Department was responsible when affairs got so tangled that they had to go to the highest level.

When General Eisenhower came back from Berlin, he sought to relieve the Army of administrative responsibility in Germany. But Secretary Byrnes refused to take over. Eisenhower then obtained a promise from General Marshall that when he became Secretary of State, Germany would be brought under his jurisdiction. But the transfer was never made. Marshall, like Byrnes, pleaded that neither staff nor organization was available.

Prices and taxes

The President is waging a demagogic campaign to tag a high price label on the Republicans. He can show that the cost of living derives in part from the premature dropping of controls and the lowering of taxation. But the Republicans are not without an *et tu, Brute!* On controls, except for OPA, the Administration was as precipitate as the Republicans, and the very tax, the excess profits tax, that Mr. Truman sought to restore at the special session was the one that Fred Vinson, as Secretary of the Treasury, proposed to drop. Mr. Truman is pitching the rest of his appeal on the bounty and favors

that would now be in the possession of the minorities but for the wicked Republicans.

Senator Taft thinks that the Republican campaign could be waged on the conflict between philosophies of government. He is counting a lot on voter sophistication! But the point he is trying to make is worth pondering. His is the plea of responsible government to keep the economy on an even keel without drying up incentives and enterprise.

He sees the antithesis in the new Truman penchant for profligacy and controls — controls which, moreover, would mushroom as the result of a spendthrift policy. The result would be a police state or an explosion, for, as Senator Taft said, "You cannot tie down the safety valve while you go stoking the furnace."

The Red hunt and the New Deal

Republican leadership, of course, will not be as high-minded as Senator Taft. In the Red scare the GOP already has its rod in pickle for the Democrats. The rod was brought out simultaneously with the special session in order to beat the Administration off the front page. It was a successful maneuver.

Undoubtedly the appeal on this score will be tremendous. The impression is being given that the government service is corroded with Reds. Figures fail to support the impression. Preliminary checks by the FBI on 1,955,314 Federal employees disclosed questionable information in 4137 cases, or a little more than two tenths of 1 per cent of the total number of persons checked.

Full-scale investigations are now being conducted in these 4137 cases, and 1391 have been completed. Some 231 persons resigned during the course of the probes, and in 13 other cases the workers are no longer with the government.

The remaining 1147 completed investigations have been turned over to the Civil Service Commission for evaluation, and it is a reasonable assumption that by no means all these persons will be denied Federal employment. The record will stand up, no doubt, with private service, and there need be no question that the screening is going on steadily. It

has to be borne in mind, too, that the bureaucracy had to be hurriedly increased in wartime.

The relative paucity of security risks in the government has intensified rather than ameliorated the effort to identify New Dealism with Communism and espionage. Actually there are not many New Dealers left in government service. The way of torturing the survivors is not limited to the Thomas Committee. One indoor sport is to leave a message on the desk of a New Dealer: "Miss Bentley wants to speak to you," and the telephone number of the House of Representatives.

There have also been telephone calls to New Dealers suggesting that "now you'll no doubt be leaving Washington. What about renting your house?" One officeholder, now an Assistant Secretary, one day found a moving van outside his house, ordered there by some cruel joker.

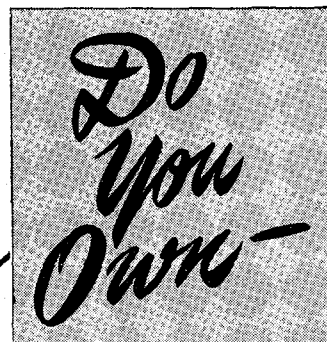
It is perhaps natural that this sort of thing should prevail after so long an administration. One remembers how Herbert Hoover was similarly crucified. In Washington in the thirties anybody who said a good word about Hoover was made to feel as if he had leprosy.

The watchword of the New Dealers was the eager equalitarianism which Tocqueville warned us against in his monumental book on America. Mr. Hoover's was liberty, and it is this aspect of Mr. Hoover, together with his actual humanitarianism, that accounts for the resurrection of his reputation. The pendulum has swung back, and the Hooverites and Old Guard Republicans are enjoying a sweet though vindictive revenge out of the goings-on at the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

What is fair investigation?

Investigation is fundamental in the proper performance of the duty of the legislature to frame wise laws, and to keep an eye on the doings of the legislature. A prime example of the service done by the investigative process of Congress was the unraveling of the Teapot Dome scandal in the twenties.

But the fear of many impartial observers is that the process is being degraded. On the quiet, one hears



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that procedure will change if Governor Dewey comes in. A premonitory sign was his making available to Senator Ferguson one of the best investigators who served under Dewey — namely, William P. Rogers.

Senator Ferguson is chairman of the investigation subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Expenditures, which is going over the ground that is now being covered by the Thomas Committee, but the difference in procedure is most marked. Senator Ferguson, of course, is not above playing politics, but he is punctilious over procedure, and by no means shares the lust of the Thomas Committee for name-slinging.

It is clear that a code of fair practice for investigation committees will be offered to Congress after the elections, chiefly to make sure of adequate screening of witnesses by expert counsel, so that, contrary to present practice, no injustice will be done to innocent individuals when they are put on the stand.

Public secrets

Truman's relations with Congress are worsened by his refusal to help the investigation committees on loyalty. The President will not allow them access to confidential records. Constitutionally, Congress is free to examine anything, but it is not always in the public interest for it to do so. It is a question how much access Congress should have to secret material, to secrets limited to three or four people, as, for instance, Joseph Grew's diary. This is the type of exemption that Judge Wyzanski of Boston specifies in his recent article on Executive-Legislative relations.

Recognition of Executive power in this respect was shown during the war when the War Department used to keep secret documents in the White House basement. The Department was far more afraid of Congress than of the enemy.

The public interest clearly would not be served by allowing employment records to float around Congress containing FBI and other reports on employees. These contain all kinds of items, including just plain gossip, for the FBI insists that it is merely a collecting and not an evaluating agency. Aside from any unfairness to

the employee in question, the practice would be bad for the national defense, for it would reveal sources of FBI information.

There is a good deal of grist for the Dewey mill in the inefficiency of government as well as in Mr. Truman's stubborn attitude toward Congressional investigators. It is difficult to understand how Silvermaster could have obtained a job, let alone the succession of jobs which he held onto for more than a decade, anywhere in the United States government. In the case of Remington, it is fantastic to see how he could have been given such a sensitive job in the Commerce Department as chairman of a committee which allocates exports.

It may be, of course, that they were kept so that they could be watched, and that that fact cannot be brought out on the side of the Administration. The FBI can't give away its secrets. Nor can it be interested in helping the investigators, since the hearings are a sort of no confidence vote in the FBI and the grand jury system. As for Senator Ferguson and Attorney General Clark, they have been at swords' points since the exposure of the voting scandal in Missouri, when ballot boxes full of votes disappeared.

The Mood of the Capital

The mood of the Capital that the Republicans are as good as elected has not changed since the special session. It is felt that the Russians are taking advantage of the campaign to press for advantages that might embarrass the Administration. The wholesome thing is that the more they press, the closer is the interparty unity on Russia. Even old campaigners are amazed, especially in view of the "no holds barred" sort of political fight that Truman is waging.

Governor Dewey kept foreign policy out of his struggle with Roosevelt because of the war. The advocates of restraint are still in the saddle of the GOP, including both Senator Vandenberg and Senator Taft, the one on the foreign and the other on the domestic front. The latter's philosophic summing up of the special session was a model of reasoning and objectivity compared with the President's demagogic statement. It is felt in the Capital that Mr. Truman is playing from desperation.

Mexico

MEXICO'S peso trouble makes an instructive example of post-war economic trends and fiscal developments in Latin America. The peso's downfall from a pegged value of 4.85 to the dollar had been anticipated for some time. It produced no serious complications in international finance, except in a few rather specialized lines of trade with Mexico. The peso itself, after devaluation, behaved rather handsomely for a contemporary currency unit whose artificial props had been pulled out from under it. It fluctuated for several weeks between six and slightly above seven to the dollar, but showed a steadying tendency to find its own level at about 15 cents, or approximately 6.50 to the dollar.

The peso ran into difficulties to a considerable extent because Mexico has been indulging enthusiastically and somewhat successfully in a number of economic programs commended to her as virtuous. Since 1940, under the administrations of Presidents Avila Camacho and Miguel Alemán, Mexican capitalists have developed more business initiative, United States style, than there has been below the Rio Grande since the Cortez conquest. The government has pulled in the strong semi-socialist controls it exercised over private business during the Calles and Cárdenas administrations in the 1920's and 1930's, and has given the new and growing entrepreneur groups a relatively free hand.

The entrepreneurs have spotted the land with new industries — the stock prescription in our times for balancing, variegating, and enlivening an economy. In a great many cases they have made money out of these modernizing services. The patriotic Mexican customer can buy anything from Mexican-made fabricated steel to Mexican-made shoes or a Mexican-made automobile battery nowadays, with assurances that the profits on it should improve his country's capital structure.

And Mexico has been anything but niggardly with the money wealth and financial prosperity which she was supposed to be acquiring. Both in domestic and in world markets, where spending is supposed to keep trade moving, she has thrown her money around lavishly. But all the government's decrees, all the pegging operations of Mexican banks

and fiscal authorities, and even some millions of dollars' worth of pegging help from the United States could not keep the peso at 4.85.

The flaws in Mexico's boom

More than a century ago, the United States began industrializing in an underpopulated half-continent where food supply could be indefinitely expanded and agricultural and factory production were relatively balanced; and where, consequently, every new population increase meant more customers for both farm and factory. Mexican industrialization in the 1940's was quite different.

Mexico simply superimposed a hodgepodge of new industries, some useful, some economically undesirable, on an overpopulated nation whose agricultural resources were running down and whose purchasing power was insufficient to sustain a great many of its people.

Some handicaps of this situation could have been overcome by letting the less desirable new industries die on the vine and making sure that the profits of the more useful ones were plowed back into the national economy through income taxes and surplus profit taxes, through better industrial wage standards, and through controlled domestic investment policies.

Instead, doubtful industries have been kept alive, a drain on the Mexican consumer's purse, by high protective tariffs. Inferior automobile batteries, for instance, cost from \$30 up in Mexico today, whereas good small car batteries sell for under \$15 in the United States. The high prices of dozens of items reduce the purchasing power of relatively well-to-do Mexican families so that they cannot buy native Mexican products, including farm produce and groceries.

In both the protected and the more "legitimate" industries, Mexican income and profit taxes are low, according to United States standards, and can be easily evaded. The various wage increases negotiated by Mexican labor unions during the war and the post-war inflation have not succeeded in making the industrial and white-collar workers more



The Atlantic Report on Mexico



profitable customers of Mexican agriculture. There have been no government policies or controls leading to reinvestment of profits in Mexican enterprises, either industrial or agricultural.

The flight of capital

Mexico's post-war boom has profited, then, largely at the expense of the country's over-all economy and has resulted in distressing imbalances. It may look well on the books of various manufacturing corporations, but actually it has been draining the economy. The greater the profits, the greater the amount of capital leaving Mexico.

On the surface the figures may not appear too alarming. Ostensibly, Mexicans have banked 70 million dollars in the United States in the past two years. But this figure represents only the openly registered deposits. There are plenty of ways to get money into American banks from Mexico which disguise the identity of the actual depositors. Unquestionably, there has been heavy investment of Mexican capital and profits in American business securities without the formality of open and obvious bank deposits. The capital drain, then, at the most conservative estimates, must measure several times 70 million dollars.

There have been even fancier fiscal manipulations by Mexican money experts. For some time before the peso's fall, for instance, it was possible to buy a Cadillac car for 14,000 Mexican pesos, ship it to Buenos Aires, and sell it for 40,000 Argentine pesos, or better. The Mexican who accompanied his car on such a "selling trip" played a sure thing in Latin American foreign exchange. He was in the expenses of his trip and a pleasant summer or winter vacation in deep South America. If he moved on to Chile — say, the Lake region for summer or winter sports — he gained still more by trading his Argentine profits for hopelessly inflated Chilean currency.

Whatever has been drained out of Mexico by these and similar shenanigans has been more than negligible. Capital-wise, Mexico has been getting poorer in the post-war period, precisely because her new industrialists were getting richer. To this extent, the capital props have been pulled out from under the new industrial structure, as well as from under the peso.

Dwindling exports

Meanwhile, various factors have been playing against the peso and the Mexican economy. The new industrialization has required investments

running into the hundreds of millions for machinery, power developments, and so forth. This has stepped up Mexico's imports prodigiously. It correspondingly has weakened Mexico's trade balance and the peso's credit standing, and has played a part in the rapid decline of Mexico's slender dollar resources.

The republic came out of the war with 350 million dollars to its credit in dollar balances. At the end of July this total was down to 114 million or less. How much of the outflow was for new machinery and how much for new cars and luxury gewgaws for the newly rich industrialists is anybody's guess. In view of the demands of the foreign trade balance on Mexico's dollar reserves, 114 million dollars is a trifling sum in any case.

And everything in the situation has tended, and is still tending, to make the import-export balances worse. Because industrial profits have not been plowed back into the domestic economy, the Mexican government has been without resources to expand its nationally owned oil fields, or even to get maximum production out of already developed fields. As a result, Mexican oil exports, which in 1923 amounted to 180 million barrels, are now down to approximately 8 million barrels — a mere trickle.

At the same time, many of the new industries are kept from operating at full efficiency, both productively and in production costs, because of power shortages. Again, because capital is fleeing the country and profits are not plowed back into the home economy, Mexico's ability to pay for, or to borrow for, expensive new power developments is shrinking.

Finally, the huge 1947 hoof-and-mouth disease epidemic led to the loss of practically all Mexico's livestock exports. It was one more ruinous blow to an already desperately sick agricultural economy. Recovery from it, if it comes at all, will take a considerable part of a decade. It would come somewhat faster, though, if Mexico's industrial and over-all economy were geared more effectively to the support of her agricultural interests.

Devaluation had to come

The peso's devaluation, authorized by Mexican Treasury Secretary Ramón Beteta on July 22, was simply an honest recognition that the economy was badly askew. The 4.85 peso already was in hopelessly bad repute. For some time black-market exchanges have existed throughout Mexico, selling

the peso short at various points below the official price, with reasonable expectations of eventual gain, as well as profits from quick turnover.

Against such competition and the normal state of Mexican morale in such matters, no government decrees could have maintained the 4.85 value longer. Mexico's credit and cash resources could not have done so, even if all other demands upon them had been ignored and they had been put to work solely at upholding the peso.

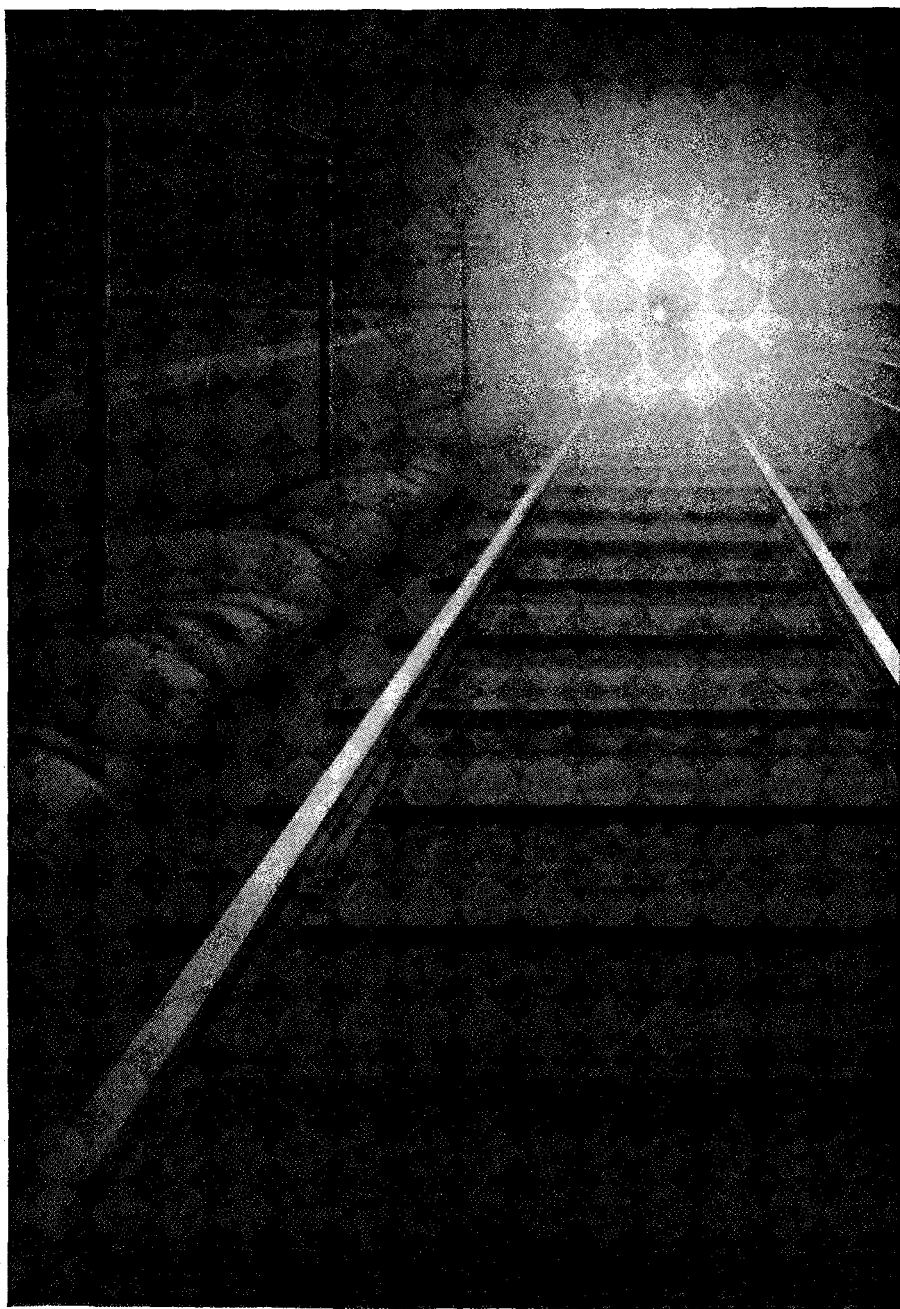
The peso was allowed officially to find its own level, because the situation had come to a point where it was bound to do that anyway. The immediate effect, of course, was to cut down the purchasing power of the inflation-starved Mexican masses still further, and to check imports, whether luxuries or essentials.

Politically, devaluation produced a new crop of rumors of revolution against the Alemán regime. These would be more credible if the Mexican Army were not fairly well provided for by the government, and if it were not in the Mexican tradition that the revolutions that really happen are not usually those one hears advance rumors about.

Dollars for Mexico?

Economically, Secretary Beteta issued rational-sounding statements to the effect that devaluation would help out in the worsening import-export situation, and that flocks of tourists drawn from the United States by the more advantageous exchange rates would improve the dollar balances. Wisps of wishfulness may have been involved with the sound sense of these pronouncements. But with or without revolution, Mexico could hardly expect to cure its peso troubles without drastically reforming many of its internal and external economic practices.

Loans from the United States or from the World Bank certainly cannot overcome the difficulties. If they lead merely to more industrialization and more profiteering by industrialists at the expense of the economy, they might even aggravate it. Mexico's current requests for 50 million dollars from the Export-Import Bank and 208 million from the World Bank may well be reviewed in the light of these possibilities.



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LETTERS TO AND FROM THE EDITOR

The Issue of the Far East

SIR:

Hearty congratulations on the excellent report on China in the August *Atlantic*. As one who lived and worked and studied twenty-eight years in China, I appreciate the viewpoint and the presentation of the facts.

In connection with the section "The U.S. Gambles on the Kuomintang," is it not a fact that our government policy is committed to efforts to broaden the base of the Nationalist Government at Nanking, to stimulate the Kuomintang to do something for the people of China? This is my understanding. If true, and there is no other way to inject life and morality into the Nanking government than by a crusade (which might approach the status of a party rebellion), what would be the attitude of the U.S. government towards such a movement for reform of the Kuomintang government, by force if necessary?

When he replies to this query, please ask your correspondent to assume that such a movement or rebellion would be constructive in nature and be conducted by pro-American, educated, and truly patriotic citizens. There actually is such a group in China, champing at the bit, as it were. And there are a score or so of its representatives now in the U.S. If such a group is to act for the salvation of China, they must of course have support from the United States — undercover support at first, and full support in proportion to the measure of their success. Will Washington help China and her suffering people by such a step? Or will Wash-

ington continue to back the selfish, money-grabbing officials of the right wing, now in control at Nanking?

I quote from the second paragraph in the section referred to above: "This theory should at least be insured against two contingencies. The first is that the minimum reforms we want might be carried out either by the Kuomintang dissidents. . . ."

Just who are the "we" referred to? The "Kuomintang dissidents" are convinced that the Nanking regime is rotten, and that there must be a change. Will "we" help them? There are several high officials with international reputations, who might be termed "Kuomintang dissidents." They and plenty more would be willing to act if only they could be certain of strong support for their patriotic steps. Could they obtain it? If such a democratic front movement could be initiated, it would probably necessitate the presence of U.S. Navy units along the Yangtze as far as Hankow, and at Tsingtao, Shanghai, Nanking, Canton, Foochow, to demonstrate U.S. support and to warn the Reds to stay back. Even if such a movement should come, it might be possible to hold the Yangtze line against the Communists, with U.S. help.

Regarding the Communists, while I am decidedly democratic and "anti-right wing," in my opinion compromise with Communism and the Cominform is just a waste of time. In the end it must come to armed conflict between Communism and the U.S., and we must defeat Communism once and for all in its very heart — the Petrograd-Stalingrad-Odessa triangle of Russian Europe. Once that

is done, the small brush fires of Communism on the fringes of the world will die out with a minimum of armed conflict.

Another point on which I should appreciate advice is this: Why do we stand shoulder to shoulder with Great Britain and France in Europe, but when it comes to the Orient, China and Japan, we attempt to shoulder the entire white man's burden, absolutely solo? This seems to me to be foolish. British and French investment in China, and good will towards China and her people, and trained Far Eastern personnel with know-how, certainly far exceed our own. Why not approach the China problem with a united world democratic front?

The "Kuomintang dissidents" have a considerable number of wise leaders and even businessmen in their ranks, and they are patriotic. Pick and shovel workers are in good supply. What is needed is U.S. (or U.N.?) backing, before respected leaders dare to jump forward to head such a movement.

AN OLD CHINA HAND

Our correspondent replies: —

"An Old China Hand" goes to the heart of two questions at once — the aims, as well as the methods, of our policy in China, and the aims, as well as the methods, of our policy toward Russia. There are no indications whatever that long-range policy planners in Washington have decided on an answer to these two questions in combination. Until there are some such indications, "An Old China Hand" and I can only be Friday afternoon quarterbacks, talking over

the possibilities of the big game as it may be played tomorrow.

"An Old China Hand" brings up the question of Russia second, but I think it must be answered first. I do not have the answer. I can only suggest some of the things that should be thought about in framing an answer. "An Old China Hand" thinks that in the end we are going to have to fight Russia — and he may be right. He thinks that we must then defeat both Russia and Communism, and do it in the heart of European Russia; when we have done so, the "small brush fires of Communism" in the rest of the world will die out.

I think some other possibilities ought to be taken into account. It is quite possible that we could defeat Russia the nation without exterminating Communism at all. I can see many reasons for arguing that it is exactly a hundred years too late to think of exterminating Communism by force. If it could not be done — at any rate it was not done — in repressing the European revolutions of 1848, can it be done now? In our long-range policy planning, we ought to draft at least contingent plans in case it turns out that the real problem is going to be how to get along in a world permanently characterized by the existence of more than one Communist-controlled government.

Communism in China is by no means a small brush fire that would automatically die out if Russia were defeated. A large number of possibilities must be kept in view. Certainly we should not overlook the possibility that we might defeat Russia and overthrow the Russian government only to find ourselves standing on the edge of a continent of guerrilla and partisan warfare. Within that continent, one of the possibilities is that the brush fire of Chinese Communism, instead of dying out, might merge with Communist-led Russian partisan warfare in a roaring forest fire.

The superior technology which makes us the most powerful nation in the world in formal warfare shows diminishing returns when unlimbered against partisan resistance based on a combination of low-grade technology and high-grade political organization. Greece has proved it. The cost of repressing a handful of partisans in Greece is running into figures that are fantastic by any standards of businesslike bookkeeping. We are rich enough to buy what we

want in Greece, if that is our whim; but expand Greece to the scale of Russia and China combined, and could even we afford it?

What can we actually do in China if we must keep in mind the possibility that a defeat of Russia would not solve the problem of China? On the one hand, it would be faint-hearted to say that the cause of Communism has already triumphed in China and that there is nothing we can do. On the other hand, the policies we have been following are getting more and more expensive and less and less successful.

"An Old China Hand" suggests that instead of simply backing the Kuomintang against the Communists we should clean house in the Kuomintang by backing its "pro-American, educated, and truly patriotic" members against the "selfish, money-grabbing officials of the right wing."

I agree that the kind of men he suggests would make a better showing. I think, however, extreme care should be used in maneuvering ourselves into a position where we can have a better cause to back. The defect in his proposal is the idea that we should pick our men in advance, back them at first "under cover," and then, if they began to be successful, come out with open support. Nobody in China could keep a secret like that, and it would not need Communist inspiration to start calling our men the "tools of American imperialism."

We might, instead, begin by cutting down our aid to the Kuomintang, step by step. We should then be safeguarded, because if the Russians started coming in (and Secretary of State Marshall has said that up to the present there has been no significant Russian intervention), we could return to a policy of increased aid with much better support from public opinion both in China and in America.

If the Russians did not come in, the Kuomintang, feeling the squeeze from the diminishing of our aid, would still have time to reform itself. Either it would have to reform itself, or there would be the "party rebellion" mentioned by "An Old China Hand." If either party reform or party rebellion resulted in measures that rallied real popular support among the Chinese themselves, we could come back in with the advantage of backing a popular cause instead of a disintegrating dictatorship.

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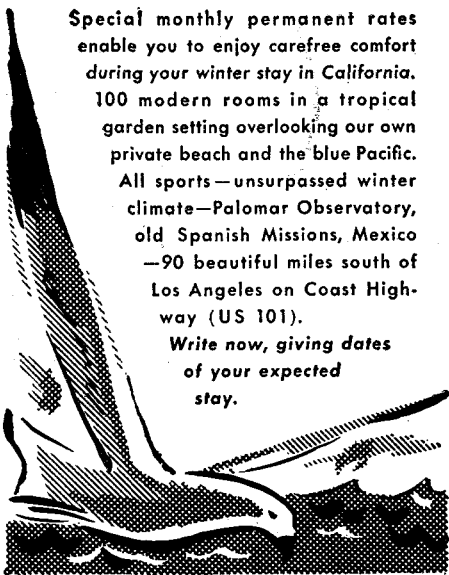
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It is essential, however, that China's reform leaders should not be selected by us in advance, either under cover or publicly. Such things are for the Chinese to decide. Only when we admit that there are certain basic functions of being an independent nation which the Chinese must decide for themselves shall we be within reach of a successful policy in China. Until that time, such suggestions as a gunboat policy along the Yangtze would only bring us disaster.

As for bringing the British and French in with us on a democratic policy for China, I agree with "An Old China Hand"; but I doubt whether they would join us until our policy is more democratic, and has better chances of success, than at present.

"Can't Spell, Can't Read"

SIR:

The article "Can't Spell, Can't Read," by J. Roswell Gallagher, M.D., in the June *Atlantic*, deserves thoughtful attention. It is quite possible that much of the poor reading ability encountered in elementary pupils is due to the various individual disabilities described by Dr. Gallagher.

However, doctrines such as Dr. Gallagher propounds are all too often seized upon by certain schools to cover up unsatisfactory methods of instruction in reading. It is much pleasanter for the schools to be able to allege that a lot of the children are a wee bit defective than to have to admit that their methods of teaching reading are defective.

For example, many schools make too early an effort to teach the children to take in words as single units, instead of breaking them down into syllables. When the children encounter a new or unfamiliar word, they cannot handle it, since they have not been adequately trained in the sounds of individual letters and common combinations of letters. Children with excellent visual memories can perhaps be trained to read fairly well according to systems of "eye drinking" and the like, as long as the words are short and simple. Yet it is hard to see how they can be expected to handle previously unknown words by such methods.

If there were more effective teaching of reading in the very beginning, there would be far less necessity for programs of "remedial reading" later

on. Many schools seem to be proud of such programs, but often they are only an admission that instruction in reading was badly botched from the start.

WALTER C. TOBIE
Old Greenwich, Conn.

SIR:

If the old-fashioned system of teaching reading is at last recognized as one cure for reading deficiency, why not start with it? What advantages can be found in the present system? Quite obviously the latter carries dangers: the danger of deficient reading skill, and the danger of the guessing habit which curses progressive schooling.

THEODORE M. PEASE
Springfield, Mass.

"The Elms Go Down"

SIR:

We in this section of Iowa are well acquainted with the White Elm or Water Elm. We take an entirely different view of these trees from that expressed by Donald Culross Peattie in "The Elms Go Down" (July *Atlantic*). They are the most useless piece of vegetation in our forests. They cannot be used for firewood because they cannot be split. The wood cannot be burned because it is full of water. It cannot be used for posts because it rots in a short time. It can be sawed into lumber but it warps and twists into corkscrews and gives the building where it is used an unpleasant odor for years. We smile with understanding when we read: "The first settlers spared the elms when they razed all other trees."

The Red Elm and the Yellow Elm are not so objectionable. The White Oak is a slower-growing tree, but it is a perfect beauty from the first year and it produces wonderful wood when it is grown.

While I am on the subject of elms, I should like to say that the famous "H" tree still stands near here. It was quite a tree when my grandfather took the land from the government land office in '54, and it is truly a majestic elm today. From a magazine article I read recently, I think it had once served the purpose of marking a trail by the Indians years ago. There is another elm about twenty rods from there which is bent so as to point in the same direction.

C. A. SHEFFIELD
Story City, Iowa

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The light carrier Independence survived the two atomic bombs at Bikini and when she was towed back to San Francisco men saw that she was still afloat. Actually she was a dangerous leper, so full of radioactivity that she could not even be used for scrap. Now we hear of plans for a super-carrier and the question arises as to whether we comprehend the lesson learned by a few at Bikini. DAVID BRADLEY, a graduate of the Harvard Medical School, had six months of training in the Manhattan District prior to the Tests. His Log, passed by the Office of Information Control of the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, tells a story every American should know.

NO PLACE TO HIDE

What the Bomb Did at Bikini

by DAVID BRADLEY, M.D.

NOT so long ago San Francisco welcomed home the light carrier *Independence*, the first of the main target vessels to return from the Bikini atom bomb tests. Photographs showed the familiar lines of the wrecked ship — her island carried away, her flight deck ripped up, her hangar deck caved in. She looked less like a ship than a paper bag blown up and burst. It was the *Independence* all right, exactly as we had left her over a year ago in Kwajalein Harbor.

Anyone who has known a modern carrier in action would be shocked by her mutilation. Although the first shot burst at some distance from her broadside, she was left little more than a derelict. Yet what is more impressive still — and likely to be overlooked — is that she remains an outcast ship. The disease of radioactivity lingers on her decks and sides and along her dingy corridors. Blasted first from the air, she survived; smothered later under tons of water, she rode out the tidal wave of the second shot and remained afloat. But the invisible poison of radioactivity she could not throw off. Because of this, not because of structural damage, she had to be towed from Kwajalein home.

Having helped to attend her and the other ships during the acute phases of her illness, I should have liked to go aboard her again, but she was anchored

offshore in strict isolation, a dangerous leper. As the papers said: "Newsmen and the public will not be allowed to approach the *Independence*. It is best, the Navy believes, to view this awful symbol of a possible future from a San Francisco hillside."

Against this whole philosophy I rebel. Newsmen and the general public are exactly the ones who most need to go aboard and get acquainted with the *Independence*. Ignorance of the law is no excuse in civil courts; similarly, before the tribunal of all humanity, which now sits in the light and dark corners of the world, ignorance of the natural laws which produced atomic energy and wrecked the *Independence* cannot be condoned.

The Bikini tests have never received adequate attention. The accounts of the actual explosions, however well intended, were liberally seasoned with fantasy and superstition; and as for the results of the tests, they have remained buried in the vaults of military security.

That sort of security is itself a superstition, and a dangerous one. It fosters misconceptions or — what is worse — indifference, and ultimately results in procrastination, half measures, and hysteria. There is nothing particularly difficult or mysterious about the scientific principles upon which an atomic explosion is based. Students all over the

world are verifying them in the laboratory and applying them to further research. For some reason, Americans have found comfort in the phrase "our industrial know-how." This is our Maginot Line. But surely our days of grace under this magic symbol are running out.

Perhaps it is good, then, that the carrier *Independence* should return to America, like the prodings of a bad conscience. What happened at "Crossroads" cannot be buried with the ships in Bikini Lagoon or towed away to rot on the beaches of Kwajalein. What happened at "Crossroads" was the clearest measure yet of the menace of atomic energy. Less spectacular perhaps than Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Bikini tests give a far clearer warning of the lingering and insidious nature of the radioactive agent which makes it an ideal weapon for use on civil populations.

The first of the Bikini tests took place on July 1, 1946. At least eight months of planning and preparation preceded that event. In that time Joint Task Force One grew from an original few thousand people to something over 40,000, and all plans underwent complete metamorphosis several times. What started as a simple laboratory experiment to determine the effectiveness of the bomb, used above and under water, became the most complex and intricate project imaginable. The Navy wanted to test its ships. Ultimately the target fleet came to include a sample of almost everything that floats. American ships, German ships, Jap ships, flattops and submarines, battleships, cruisers, destroyers, landing craft, ships made of riveted plates, ships made of welded plates, floating dry docks made of reinforced cement — even seaplanes — were included.

The part of my group in this complex Task Force was a small one. We were what was called the Radiological Safety Section — or in the colloquialism of the Task Force, "Geiger men." As a sort of Department of Public Health, the Radiological Safety Section included doctors, radiologists, physicists, instrument experts, and almost anyone with a smattering knowledge of electronics. Prepared for the worst, we even had psychiatrists.

Concurrently with the Task Force, we grew from a few score of men to several hundred, and eventually were given the use of one of the latest hospital ships of the Navy, the U.S.S. *Haven*, a beautiful white tall-sided ship equipped with ample laboratories and completely air-conditioned. This last luxury was not so much a concession to the soft, effete scientists as a necessary protection for the delicate electronic instruments used in the detection of radioactivity.

Our mission in Operation Crossroads may be simply stated in the words of President Truman, who requested Admiral Blandy to take all necessary precautions to see "that no one gets hurt" at Bikini. Men of the Radiological Safety Section were there-

fore present at most of the activities of the Task Force. In the air, on the sea, and on board ship, their job was the same; namely, to stand watch with Geiger counters for invisible booby traps of radioactivity. Their assignment began at Bikini but spread to include the neighboring atolls, the hundreds of miles to Eniwetok, Guam, the Philippines, Hawaii, and ultimately to the seaports of the West Coast. Their job is still going on. Thus the men of the Radiological Safety Section had an unparalleled opportunity to meet the bomb at close quarters, and to learn something of the public health problem of fissionable materials.

2

SATURDAY, June 1, 1946. — The U.S.S. *Haven* is a good ship, and considering the amount of superstructure, does remarkably little rolling. She is 520 feet long, 70 abeam, and is powered by steam turbines which drive her along at about 16 knots. The engines and stack are aft, on the fantail, so we get little of the vibration and oily smoke. The "passengers" aboard — Army, Navy, and civilian — number several hundred. Most are older men. Some are well-known scientists, some have worked with radiation in the Manhattan District, but the majority come with little more than a scientific background.

THURSDAY, June 6. — Lectures in theoretical physics have given way to the practical business of the detection of radioactivity. We have been issued an assortment of instruments with which to become acquainted. The sun-scorched decks of the *Haven* are alive with schools of monitors moving to and fro in front of pigs of lead in which minute but potent radium sources are housed. The picture of a man stooped intently over his small magic box, listening, by means of his earphones, to the incoming barrage of clicks picked up by the Geiger tube, is becoming a familiar one.

From the opening in one end of each lead pig comes a stream of radioactivity as sharp and definite as water from a fire hose. Since the streams come from a known source, and die away as the square of the distance from that source, it is possible to test and calibrate the instruments with fair accuracy. Once the principles are understood, the procedure of interpreting the readings in terms of tolerances and dangers must become second nature to the monitor. The Geiger counter is a sixth sense, a prerequisite to survival in an atomic age.

All forms of radiation are too small to be seen or felt, too stealthy to be heard or smelled. But the disturbance they make in their environment can be detected in many ways: by the fogging of photographic film; by the comet's tail of ionized particles in a Wilson cloud chamber; by the discharging of an electroscope; or by the clicks of electrical discharges in a Geiger counter.

The Geiger counter has one big disadvantage: it is too sensitive for the practical kind of work we shall have at Bikini. Designed for detecting radiations almost before there are any present, the counters are jammed and rendered completely useless in the presence of radiation of sufficient intensity to be significant or possibly dangerous. Most of us will entrust our manhood to a machine known as an ionization chamber. This type of radiation meter is a thousand times less sensitive than a Geiger counter, and was designed for the Normandy invasion, against the possibility of radio warfare by the Germans.

Such is the nature of our studies, conducted on the skillet of the navigation deck.

TUESDAY, June 11. — Tomorrow Bikini! Time has become short. Less than three weeks for the Commander of Joint Task Force One to brief and drill his team in the intricate plans for Able Day.

It will be difficult to convince people of the dangers of radiation, a danger which is evident only upon the dial of some Geiger machine, especially when you consider what minute amounts of radioactive materials are significant.

Take radium as an example: a few millionths of a gram of radium lodged within the bones of a human being may be fatal. The material of which the bomb is made — plutonium — has much the same action and is even more toxic. Once absorbed into the body — via cuts, or breathing, or by eating — these substances are hard to remove. They tend to deposit in the bones, where they either wreck the blood-producing marrow, so that the person dies from lack of blood, or stimulate the formation of fatal bone tumors.

Radiation from the outside — either gamma rays or neutrons — acts to injure or to destroy the cells by ionizing their constituent molecules, much as X-rays do. We are accustomed in medicine to using X-rays to burn out cancer cells. We know, therefore, about what is safe and what is not. X-ray specialists in this country have set as their safe maximum dose one tenth of a unit of radiation (the roentgen) per day. This is conservative. A person might be able to take a hundred or a thousand times this amount in a single dose and suffer no permanent effects. Nevertheless, the Task Force has accepted the standard one tenth of a roentgen per day as the maximum allowable daily dose of radiation.

The danger from radiation, like the danger from sunburn, or snake poison, or strychnine, or almost any other hazard, is merely one of degree. Life on this planet is well accustomed to a measurable amount of radiation. Cosmic rays and the radioactive materials present at the earth's surface total about one roentgen per year, or about one thirty-sixth of the accepted maximum daily tolerance.

But in dealing with the enormous amounts of radiation which will result from the explosion of

one atomic bomb, this factor of 36 does not seem much of a margin of safety. For example, if one ten-millionth of a gram of radium deposited within the body is the maximum amount a person may have with reasonable safety, thirty-six times this, or thirty-six ten-millionths of a gram, would almost certainly be fatal.

Millionths of a gram would be almost invisible fractions of a grain of table salt. Yet at Bikini we shall not be dealing in grains, nor shovelfuls. It is predicted that the radiation to be born in the Bikini explosions will be the equivalent of *tons* of radium. That is the problem.

3

WEDNESDAY, June 12. — Out of a hot sea, out of the hot monotony of an empty Pacific, came a low bright yellow line, and back of it loomed the gray silhouettes of ships. Bikini.

Soon we could make out the contours of the land, with its dense thatch of palms, its steel towers and cluster of dwellings. On either side, the land sinks into the breakers, emerging further on in little islets or mere sandspits. These frail island excrescences are protected from complete obliteration by a breakwater of red coral — the barrier reef — which surrounds the atoll on its ocean side as a sort of broken picket fence.

The atoll is roughly rectangular, 10 miles wide and running 20 miles to the west. To the south-east is the "pass," and the main island of Bikini makes up the northeast corner; 75 miles due west is Eniwetok, and 150 miles southeast is Kwajalein. This is our laboratory.

Rounding in through the pass, we entered the quiet turquoise waters of the lagoon to find the fleet packed stern to bow in the anchorage. The target ships are all here, moored in their final array, stiff and solemn as though presenting arms before their last retreat.

The target fleet is composed largely of obsolete ships, some well known and loved. The staunch and storied *Saratoga* ("Sara") is here, third of our big carriers, repeatedly wounded in the past war but still the queen of the fleet. She lies a little apart in regal privacy down toward the pass, and as we crossed close under her bow we could see the assortment of military gear, planes, tanks, anchored on her flight deck for the test.

The center of the target area is jammed like Gloucester Harbor in a blow: the *New York*, battlewagon of 1914, looking odd, squat, and junky compared with modern ships; the *Pennsylvania*; the *Arkansas*; and two old cruisers, the *Pensacola* and the *Salt Lake City*. Strangest of all is the giant Jap battleship, the *Nagato*, an ugly anthropoid creation easily distinguishable by the fantastic fire-control tower. This many-storied buttressed pile of junk looks as though it had been thrown together without

plan or purpose out of odds and ends of American scrap iron.

Dead center in the target is the *Nevada*. For all that she is a relic of post-Spanish-American War days, she is still a handsome battlewagon. Something about her gracefully pyramiding superstructure appears designed for beauty first and utility second, although those who felt the weight of her mighty guns backing them up at Anzio and Normandy might disagree. She is painted entirely red now as a better target, and is a ship of singular beauty.

As for the chinks in this target array, they are caulked with destroyers, subs, attack transports, landing craft, cement dry docks, and a sample of almost everything in the Navy supply catalogue. Most are naval heirlooms now. Among the modern ships are the light carrier *Independence* and the graceful German battle cruiser *Prinz Eugen*.

This is, of course, a dead fleet, and something of the mute sadness and mystery of the cemetery hangs about the ships as they nose patiently into the trade winds and await their final ordeal. Around the periphery, and up toward the main island of Bikini, is anchored the live fleet in all its gay regalia, colors flying, signals blinking, small boats churning the lagoon into streaks of foam. Who knows? Perhaps this live fleet, for all its vain vitality, is also out of date — like ourselves, not designed for atomic wars.

4

FRIDAY, June 14. — Today we had our final briefing from Colonel Stafford Warren, chief of the Radiological Safety Section. The plan for Able Day is a fascinating one, involving the movements of thousands of people in hundreds of widely separated units, whose second hands must converge together on the final "How Hour."

The plan is roughly this: —

Weather permitting, Test Able will be held on July 1. The bomb will be dropped from a B-29 at an unspecified altitude, and radio silence from all air and surface craft at this time will enable everyone in the Task Force to hear the bombardiers' broadcast of their bomb run and final release. The live fleet will be coasting along twenty to thirty miles upwind; while in the air, and at varying distances, will be numerous planes, flying photographic, radiological reconnaissance, and numerous other missions. All personnel will be required to wear specially designed extremely dense goggles, for in the first few millionths of a second of the actual explosion a tremendous flash of ultraviolet radiation is released.

It is hard to convince the mind of the magnitude of this explosion. We are told, for example, that the power of the bomb is the equivalent of 20,000 tons of TNT. But who of us have ever seen a Hercules

Powder Plant go up, or even a small wheelbarrow full of TNT blow? We are told that the intensity of the heat and flash at the instant of detonation will be fifty times that of the sun, which sounds like a good way to get a year's requirements of vitamin D. The ball of fire which then envelops the target center, representing the heat generated by the explosion, is about half a mile in diameter. As it expands, it rises, becoming a sphere, wrapped in smoke and steam, and at last collapses into a tremendous uprushing convection current, climbing at the rate of 10,000 feet a minute to the stratosphere.

After the cloud has been carried away by the ever faithful trade winds, the first cautious probings into the target area will be made by two Navy flying boats — Martin BPM-5's — which will make sweeps over the area at progressively lower altitudes until dangerous radiation is encountered.

This interesting little reconnaissance problem has fallen to Frank Larson and me. Our planes are to be equipped with a variety of instruments so that radiation of several kinds and intensities may be picked up. According to our findings, radioed in to the control ship, and from information from automatic self-broadcasting Geiger counters located on buoys within the target area, the subsequent plan of attack by the Task Force can be directed. Small surface craft, and eventually landing parties, will be sent in. What they will find and what they will have to do cannot be predicted, but they will have to keep a constant close check on the lagoon water, and if possible attempt to beach sinking or burning vessels.

In the steady trades, the giant plume may be expected to hold together for some time. Army airplanes and Navy destroyers will ride herd on the outlaw as far as they can follow it, and Eniwetok, 75 miles roughly downwind, may have to be unceremoniously evacuated.

Such is the plan for Able Day, as described by the Colonel in our final briefing today. We drew our instruments and gear; tomorrow the air contingent moves to Kwajalein. Frank, Tom Madden, Charlie Wells, and several others of us make up a smaller group who will be based on Ebeye, next to Kwaj, where the Navy has its seaplane squadrons.

This afternoon, after getting our assignments and our gear, most of us went ashore to drink beer and think it over. The officers' club was doing a land-office business in dispensing cold drinks, and after a couple, just to make up for the day's dehydration, Tom and Frank and I got to brooding over our assignment. Our main worry concerned the possibility of finding the air over the lagoon full of dangerous radioactive particles. We have been issued gas masks, the ordinary assault masks, but no one seemed to know whether or not they would filter out fission products. The B-29's would be all right, since they have cabins which can be sealed off and pressurized with oxygen. But not the old flying

boats, which were not designed for high-altitude flying.

So we dug up our old friend Dr. Hirschfelder, of Wisconsin, who has more useful information scribbled on his cuffs than a football captain at exam time. He is what is officially known as a "Phenomenologist" — one who not only can predict the direst events with candor and a sort of detached macabre humor, but who can also give the statistics to the third decimal point.

On hearing our problem, he proceeded to make a few logarithmic calculations on the back of an envelope, then announced that the dispersion of the fission products would be so great as to constitute no hazard. "Oh, no — em — you would all be dead from — em — radiation before you could inhale enough to hurt you."

That was comforting, but to press the point: "So you think that the gas masks are superfluous?"

"Yes, I do."

"And if you ran into a cloud of hot stuff, you would not bother to wear one?"

"I, well — em —" putting the envelope back in his coat pocket — "yes — em — yes, I probably would, though I couldn't tell you why."

5

SATURDAY, June 15. — On to Ebeye. The flight down to Kwajalein gave us our first relief impression of coral atolls. Seen from above the delicate irregular chains of islets and sand bars are so many necklaces of tiny green and yellow jewels, strung on a frayed silken strand of surf.

Our course was southeast 150 miles to the main island of the Kwajalein Atoll. Ebeye lies just four miles north, and both are at the southeast corner of the atoll. Heavy fighting took place on both islands, and along the way one sees a number of rusting hulks of Jap ships beached inside the reef, in the lagoon, chin up on the reef and stern in deep water.

Arriving at Ebeye — treeless Ebeye, one mile long and 150 yards wide — we reported for duty.

MONDAY, June 17. — This afternoon, Commander Pew, skipper of our seaplane squadron, called a meeting of all hands in the briefing room. Tomorrow is to be a rehearsal of all air groups, and in less than a week the final dress rehearsal takes place. The men of this squadron are good American types, clean-cut, vigorous, gum-chewing characters dressed in shorts and sandals cut from GI boots. Morale is clearly no problem on Ebeye. All they wanted from us "Geiger men" was an assurance of continuing manhood, and they would be willing to tackle an atomic bomb every morning before breakfast, if not before coffee.

TUESDAY, June 18. — Spot time was set at 4.30. We arose an hour early to find the darkness crying with wind and the promise of rain. Shortly before

take-off time word came of storms at Bikini and official postponement of the rehearsal. So we returned to our sacks to doze and watch the dawn come up, gray, misty, full of rain squalls.

Tom, Lars, and I, having nothing better to do, caught the midmorning boat to Kwajalein, to have a look around and buy something just for the feel of buying something again. The Radiological Safety group over there have fared even worse with their instruments than we have. The humid and salt-laden atmosphere has shorted out more than half of their Geiger counters.

We went down to the airstrip, which occupies two thirds of the island. From one end of that mile-long strip of macadam the B-29's and giant cargo ships are lined up at parade rest. Those concerned with Operation Crossroads are under armed guard. The photographic planes can be identified by the black P on an orange field, painted on their rudders. Others bear an emblem of black chain lightning indicating that they are detailed to pick up and measure the shock wave of the first atomic blast as it is propagated through the air.

"Dave's Dream," the already famous drop ship, whose crew have been practicing their bomb run for months, is easily identified by the large black B on her fin. She stands entirely apart, on the far side of the runway. There, next to the ocean, and nearly half a mile from the regular installations, a special ramp has been built to facilitate loading of the bomb. Not far away is a group of Quonset huts and some cement vaults where the national secret and its attending scientists keep their strict isolation. "Dave's Dream," tail high on the ramp, looks set for a flying start as soon as the hot stuff comes aboard.

THURSDAY, June 27. — Colonel Talbot, chief of our Air Reconnaissance group, dropped in today with mail and the latest instructions from the U.S.S. *Haven*. Among other preparations for Able Day, we were instructed to make blood counts on ourselves. I doubt if there is the slightest scientific value in making a single blood count per radiological monitor, but it serves to illustrate again how difficult it is to assess the damage resulting from radiation, and to carry out preventive measures.

The belief that radiation affects the blood has become deep-rooted in people's minds since the days when a number of radium-dial workers, making luminous clocks, died of an acquired anemia. This concept also has received additional support from stories that people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki were dying from anemia or from hemorrhage.

These things are true. The same situation can be produced in experimental animals by exposing them to X-rays. At certain levels of radiation, the animals will die of massive and uncontrollable hemorrhage, usually from the bowels, which are delicate and especially vulnerable. This happens a week or two after a heavy dose of X-rays, and

appears to be due to the disruption of the normal clotting mechanism.

With lower but repeated doses of radiation, the animals may survive this bleeding phase, only to die in a few months, like the radium-dial workers, of a lack of blood resulting from injury to the blood-producing bone marrow.

Like any other toxic agent, the danger of radiation depends upon three factors: (1) the nature or kind of radiation, (2) the dose, and (3) the resistance of the individual. An ordinary X-ray of the chest gives a person about one tenth of a roentgen. A study for stones in the gall bladder will amount to six or seven roentgens. If you have an ulcer and have to have a study made of the stomach and upper intestinal tract under a fluoroscope you might get anywhere from ten to forty roentgens. That probably won't hurt you if you don't have to have it repeated every two weeks. Indeed, given to small areas of the body, such as we often have to do in treating cancer, a person can stand 6000 to 8000 roentgens. However, if the dose is spread over the entire body, several hundred roentgens would probably be lethal.

It is this radiation to the body as a whole which we must expect in working with the atomic bomb. Conceivably one of us could accidentally get himself overdosed with radiation and die as other experimental animals do. If we were so injured by a fatal exposure, doubtless our counts would show the expected changes. But to a dead man this is pretty academic. A far more important practical consideration is whether or not blood tests can be used to indicate dangerous but sublethal exposures. Could they, for example, be used to safeguard the health of crews going aboard ships after the shots? Would they indicate when a man is getting too much, and do so in time to get him out of his hazardous assignment? Or to give the problem wider scope: in the event of an atomic war, would blood tests be of any value in protecting the fire fighters and engineers at work in a bombed city?

That is the hitch. When would there be time for such complex measures? One blood count is meaningless. First you must establish the norm for each individual. To do this accurately would require five or ten blood determinations taken before exposure. After exposure frequent checkups would be necessary to determine any downhill trend. This meticulous determination of the normal is necessary because exposures of significance to the patient might be reflected in only slight variations in the blood.

Blood tests were made by the thousands in the Manhattan District, where the clean and controllable conditions of a scientific laboratory were available. But during an atomic war there would be no time for such precise measurements. There typically field conditions would exist and immediate decisions would have to be made, based on

the crude and practical measurements available.

Thus it seems doubtful that either science or humanity will be advanced many micra by our making isolated observations on our blood now, a few days before Able Day. The order is understandable. Under the circumstances there is not much else to do. There is no harm in it provided no one is deluded by the false security of such a scientific fetish.

6

JULY 1: Able Day. — Our alarm clocks rang at 3.30. Last-minute reports showed that Able Day had arrived as scheduled. We stumbled through the darkness to Squadron Headquarters where the crews and pilots were gathering. My ship had been at her mooring all night; so after digging up a few spare canisters for the gas masks, I hiked across the cement apron to the wharf.

By 5.30 in the first light of dawn we were airborne, climbing slowly to 8000 feet and swinging away to the northwest. Dawn came and passed unnoticed. There was much to do. First there were the instruments, the six of them on the navigation table. Turning them on I tested each one with a small pocket radium source. Over the Geiger counters the background clicks were coming in at their usual hundred or so counts per minute.

Next there were the film badges, protective goggles, and gas masks to pass out to all hands. In spite of the distracting smell of steak — ah, the wonderful fragrance of frying steak! — coming from the galley, the crew welcomed their issue of strange gear. The little films, worn in the pocket, were sheer mystery to them; the goggles meant total darkness during the actual flash; but the gas masks they understood, and despite the inconvenience of flying encumbered with such a device, they were glad to have them.

The hour and a quarter passed quickly. By the time we had cleared away the steak and French fries, washed them down with a cup of coffee, and topped it all off with a cigarette, we were dropping down through the cottony cloud layers to Bikini. The live fleet was strung out in several columns under us, and some twenty miles away the target fleet was visible bunched up at one end of the lagoon. At 3000 feet we were running into a steady sea of fleecy clouds and there was some doubt in our minds whether the drop ship could make out the target.

However, we soon picked up the broadcast we had been waiting for. Calmly and slowly the bombardier aboard "Dave's Dream" was saying, "This is Skylight 1. Skylight 1. Ten minutes before first simulated bomb release. . . . Stand by. . . . Mark. . . . Ten minutes before first simulated bomb release. . . . First practice run. . . ."

It came through clear and sharp, and instinctively you looked up even though knowing that Skylight 1

was too high to be visible. Radio silence had been ordered throughout the fleet so that all planes and ships could hear the big bomber.

"This is Skylight 1, Skylight 1," came the voice again. "Two minutes before simulated bomb release. Two minutes before simulated bomb release. . . . Stand by. . . . Mark. . . . First practice run."

The voice from above called the one-minute mark. Then, "This is Skylight 1, Skylight 1. . . . Coming up on simulated bomb release. . . . Stand by. . . . Mark. . . . End of first practice run, first practice run." In our minds we could see the slim, silvery B-29 swinging slowly away to begin her next run. Would this be it?

As though in answer the calm voice said, "This is Skylight 1, Skylight 1. . . . Predicted time of actual bomb release 30 minutes. . . . Predicted time of actual release 30 minutes. . . ."

We made another sweep over the fleet. As in the rehearsal, the ships were strung out in Indian file and barely stirring up a green wake. You could see the people standing motionless at the rail, watching the faint smudge of Bikini Atoll on the horizon line. Even the smoke lazily tailing out from the stacks seemed intent upon the fateful island. For all the roar of our engines, everything seemed to be holding a breathless silence. Finally, after twenty minutes had passed and no sound had come from Skylight 1, our radioman began to get the jitters. Suppose we shouldn't receive the word of the bomb drop and were blinded by the flash. He began to spin his dials. What a relief when the words came through, calm as ever: "This is Skylight 1, Skylight 1. Five minutes before actual bomb release. . . . Mark. . . . Five minutes before actual bomb release. . . . Stand by."

Five minutes!

"Skylight 1, Skylight 1. . . . Two minutes before actual bomb release. . . . Mark. . . . Two minutes before actual bomb release. . . . Adjust all goggles. . . . Adjust all goggles. . . . Stand by. . . ."

And then at last: "Coming up on actual bomb release. . . . Stand by. . . . [An eternity]. . . . Bomb away. . . . Bomb away. . . . Bomb away. . . . Bomb away."

I began to count the seconds to myself: 20 (our ship was flying away from the target under automatic pilot) — 30 (nothing to be seen through the black goggles, and the pounding of one's heart made counting difficult) — 35 — 40 (I suddenly realized I had been holding my breath since the time of the bomb release) — 45 — 50 — 60 — Nothing happened.

For us the bomb went off unannounced. The ball of fire which had fused acres of the New Mexico desert into glass, and had turned Hiroshima into a symbol of man's inhumanity, burst over the target ships, seared the paint from their decks and melted

down their masts, but at twenty miles gave us no sound or flash or shock wave.

Coming out from under we could discern no change in the world. Had it been a dud? Had we miscalculated the time — to be now blinded by the flash? The radio was silent.

Then suddenly we saw it — a huge column of clouds, dense, white, boiling up through the strato-cumulus, looking much like any other thunderhead but climbing as no storm cloud ever could. The evil mushrooming head soon began to blossom out.

For minutes the cloud stood solid and impressive, like some gigantic monument, over Bikini. Then finally the sheering of the winds at different altitudes began to tear it up into a weird zigzag pattern. Winds high up were from the west, so the head tended to move out over us and menace the live fleet, while shreds of the torn column beneath could be seen moving slowly westward above the water.

We turned and made a couple of sweeps over the live fleet just to reassure the Senators and Admirals, and then climbed to our specified altitude and headed for the tiny atoll. For a long time we could see nothing. Someone ventured to suggest that all the ships had been sunk. But smoke at least was visible, moving slowly downwind. Then our pilot said, and his voice was something to hear: "Say, look! There's the *Sara* — still standing — beautiful, ain't she? Just like she was getting up steam to move out."

Soon after that we were able to make out the entire target area. Few ships, if any, had been sunk. Many of them were beginning to smoke and new fires seemed to be breaking out by the minute.

We were by now well under the tawny canopy. Nothing, however, had shown up on our instruments. The air was clear of fission products, which, carried aloft by the boiling updrafts, would soon be joining the three other atomic bombs in the stratosphere. Then we heard Larson break through with the message, "Leg 3 completed. Zero dose leg 3."

That made us feel a lot better, and we decided to try to make our sweeps without gas masks. Things were hectic. We would fly a leg for a few minutes and then our pilot, Lieutenant Lower, would upend the ship in a vertical bank, with the lagoon and its ships spinning like a pinwheel on the end of our wing, and we were off on the next leg.

Lars, transmitting on the same frequency, had found radiation, and we, as we approached the center of the target area, ran into it too. With a nervous sputter my Geiger counters came to life. At first it was patchy, seeming to be highest when we were passing over some ship. Toward dead center the ships were more closely bunched and there our counters really began to sing.

Upon our first contact with radiation I had called over the interphone to the skipper to reassure him. Now with radiation a hundred times stronger I

called him again: "Skipper, where are you now?"

"Coming in over the main target area."

"Well, we're really in it now. Are we halfway through?"

"Just about. The *Nevada* is just ahead. Want to turn out?"

"No. It's not that bad yet. You could stick around here for several days if you had to."

The *Nevada*, gaudy red forward and pretty well singed aft, turned out to be some distance from the most intense radiation, so we knew that "Dave's Dream" had not exactly scored a bull's-eye. We were flying low enough so that the ships passed rapidly beneath us, and it was impossible to get more than a fleeting glimpse of them. Most of them seemed to be afire but not in critical condition. The apparent damage was surprisingly slight. The *Sara*, of course, had been wiped clear. Some of the cruisers and battleships had had their superstructures twisted and melted into a tangle of junk, and the light carrier *Independence* had been blown into a cocked hat. But otherwise the fleet looked as if it might survive.

Expecting much more dire and dramatic events, our crew was disappointed. There was much pooh-poohing of the bomb over the interphone, and at last the co-pilot growled: "Well, it looks to me like the atom bomb is just about like the Army Air Force — highly overrated."

Our first sweep went very well. There was nothing to be found in the air; the only radiation was that coming up from the water and from the ships. Most of this was doubtless due to radiation induced in the central target ships themselves, for each one seemed to catch us in a beam, as though from a searchlight, as we passed overhead. However, up near the northwest corner we suddenly ran headlong into an unexpected jolt of radiation which made the counters sing. We were by that time miles away from the ships. Thinking that we might be running into an invisible streamer from the original cloud I called to Lieutenant Lower: —

"Monitor to Captain! Skipper, I don't know what we just ran into but we're back in the hot stuff. See anything below?"

In a moment: "Nope — not a thing. No oil slick, no ships."

The co-pilot chimed in: "What about that smoke? We're just about downwind from those fires now. See it?"

That caused a spontaneous scramble for gas masks, and so for the next two hours, making surveys at lower altitudes, we huffed and puffed, sweated and cursed, and struggled with communications from the inside of the steamy masks. The radiation got progressively more intense as we came down, and, of course, the smoke got more generalized. However, the fires seemed to be self-limited, and we were thankful that no ships, loaded with ammo as they were, blew up beneath us.

By early afternoon our job was done, and we climbed out over the live fleet which by now was approaching the atoll from the southeast. Warily and still in single file they were lifting along, and the first of the small boats were already beginning to probe into the outer lagoon. These small boats were equipped with radio transmitters and batteries of Geiger counters. We did not envy their job; monitors and damage control personnel would be sweating it out in heavy coveralls, boots, rubber gloves, and gas masks, trying to board the big ships from those wet, greasy, jumping decks.

At last from the control ship came the welcome message: "Mission completed. Return to base." We had been in the air nearly twelve hours. Now the tension was gone, everyone suddenly became tired and starved. No smoking and eating had been permitted during the surveys, lest anyone should thereby pick up dangerous material from the air. So a complete survey of the ship was in order. We discarded everything that had been open — all cigarette packs, bread, fruit, even the rest of that juicy steak. The boys took it pretty well, especially when I okayed a fresh gallon jar of olives and some canned beef.

But not to be able to smoke — that was torture. Finally Lieutenant Lower could stand it no longer. "Bradley," he barked over the interphone, "how soon will I die if I smoke?"

"How old are you, Skipper?"

"Thirty."

"Oh, probably not for another thirty years."

"Well, hell, I'll die a lot sooner than that if I can't have a smoke."

After that we abandoned all conservative policy. The Captain ordered the ports to be opened to air out the ship, and all broken packs of cigarettes to be thrown overboard; then we began to live like human beings again. Kwajalein looked as sunny and serene as ever as we circled for our approach.

(To be continued)

(Dr. Bradley's book will be published under the Atlantic-Little, Brown imprint later this fall. This is the first of three installments entered for the I Personally awards.)



ELLIS G. ARNALL was Governor of Georgia, his native state, from 1943 to 1947; in those four years, he restored the prestige of the state university, put through the repeal of the poll tax, fought the Klan in the open, and worked unceasingly to diversify the agriculture of the land he loved so well. A leading Democrat, who speaks his mind with courage and candor, he is the author of *The Shore Dimly Seen* and *What the People Want*, and the logical choice for the third in our series of articles on the coming election. Gardner Jackson's article on Henry A. Wallace appeared in the *Atlantic* for August, and Oren Root's article, on the *Republican Revival*, in September.

THE DEMOCRATS CAN WIN

by ELLIS G. ARNALL

1

THE opinion that the United States will embrace conservatism for a long period, beginning with the election of 1948, requires the rejection of almost all the facts available and the adoption of an illogic that is stupendous. Since V-J Day, in no country except the Union of South Africa has a conservative party won at the polls in a free election.

That does not mean that, because of the tactical situation and the acknowledged disgruntlement of average Americans with runaway inflation and somewhat irresponsible bipartisan diplomacy, the Republican Party may not retain control of the House, even retain control of the Senate, or possibly elect Thomas E. Dewey as President. Politics in America can be temporarily illogical; and illogical though the thought of a Republican victory may seem, it is not impossible.

However, to the surprise of American onlookers, who were excited by the magnificent courage and even more magnificent rhetoric of Winston Churchill, the Conservative Party in England was reduced to a hopelessly ineffective opposition status in the post-war election. Wherever free elections were held on the Continent, without the intervention of either Russian or Western force, the victory went either to the centrist or the mildly leftist parties.

The Democratic Party of 1948 enters the campaign with certain obvious handicaps. President Truman is not an attractive candidate. The Democratic Party has been in power for almost sixteen years. There exists a revolt from party leadership of three elements held within the organization by President Roosevelt: the labor vote, the intellectual Left, and the Southern organizations. There is general dissatisfaction with the rising cost of living

and with the shortage of housing. Universal military training is eyed with suspicion by many Americans. The failures of American diplomacy in the Far East, Palestine, and Italy, and the obvious need to reassociate American foreign policy with American morality, have weighed heavily upon the consciences of many voters.

Those are the liabilities, as stated by the petitioners who would seek to have the Democratic Party declared insolvent and proceed with a liquidation. This metaphor was suggested by Walter Lippmann, who wrote earnestly, on the eve of the conventions of the two major parties, that the Democrats, whom he foresees as certain of defeat, should select as their candidate someone suitable to act as receiver. In courts of equity, it is not considered desirable to place a going concern in receivership or bankruptcy, or to order it dissolved and liquidated and its assets distributed, unless the liabilities as actually proved exceed the assets as properly ascertained.

Republican political orators, from 1936 through 1944, continually asserted that Franklin Delano Roosevelt overstated the assets of his party and concealed certain of its liabilities. Seeking Democratic liquidation, they predicted it—from the “election of a Chinaman” as prophesied by Henry L. Mencken in 1936, to the election of Thomas E. Dewey as predicted by Herbert Brownell in 1944.

Any middle-of-the-road party has a tendency to become a coalition of divergent interests, whether in opposition or in power. It is equally true that any conservative party tends to become a regional and caste organization, especially when trusted with office for longer than a very brief interval while the center regroups its forces. Neither the Republican Party in the United States nor the Conservative

Party in Great Britain has ever made, within the past three quarters of a century, the slightest effort to be national in scope; they were, frankly at times but more often surreptitiously, dedicated to the service of limited groups within favored sections.

Geographically, the Republican Party made no contest in more than a fourth of the American states, and little more than token resistance in some others. Similarly, the Conservative Party in Great Britain made no pretense to nation-wide competition for Parliamentary seats. The Democratic Party is aggressive even in Vermont, and at one time or another has carried every American state, just as the now deceased Liberal Party in Britain battled for almost every constituency. Reaction aims at control of government, not at polling the people.

The Democratic Party always has been a coalition. Consequently, the Democratic Party always has carried water upon both shoulders, and moved forward grudgingly two steps and retreated one. The imminence of its dissolution has been pointed out through the years by its critics, with striking phrases and equally striking inaccuracy.

Actually, only the stratification of American society can produce liquidation of the middle-of-the-road party. While this stratification is asserted by spokesmen of the extreme Left, and tacitly confirmed by such responsible conservatives as Senator Taft by his sponsorship of subsidized housing for low-income groups, it is neither acknowledged nor desired by the average American.

But the durability of the Democratic Party as a political entity and its immediate future, in the 1948 election and in the subsequent four years, are quite different things. They bear a relationship only because it is essential to understand the nature of the Democratic coalition and the mechanics of American politics.

Modern political history in the United States dates from 1868, when the extreme conservatives, the railroad entrepreneurs, the extreme Eastern sectionalists, and the established manufacturers of the East seized control of the Republican Party, ousted the fervid abolitionists, dismissed the remaining Whigs to the status of innocuous elder statesmen, and entered into an era of corruption that even the more dishonorable of the early Federalists or the more venal of the leaders of the party sponsored by the Bank in Jacksonian days would have gagged at.

Broken effectively because of the flirtation of a few leaders with the Knights of the Golden Circle in the Middle West, because of the unpopularity of its historic stand for civil liberties in the East, and because of the disfranchisement of the South during the longest and bitterest military occupation in modern history, the Democratic Party entered that era in a condition that its enemies found invitingly unhealthy.

By 1872 the first modern Democratic coalition

was established, when gallant and cantankerous Horace Greeley flung his battered old white hat into the ring and set off tilting at windmills astride both the Democratic donkey and the Rosinante of his own heroic imagination. They did not win that year, but by 1876 they had enough strength to do so, only to be cheated. In 1884 the Democratic Party was in power, and though, by the device of nominating the Wendell Willkie of his day, Benjamin Harrison, the Republicans returned transiently to the Presidential office, they were driven into complete retreat as a national party and by 1896 had recognized their completely regional position.

The Democratic coalition of 1896, however, that went down to defeat was not the same coalition that existed in 1876 and for twenty years thereafter. Industrial workers, herded to the polls under threats, formed the backbone of the conservative vote, while the surprised and normally somewhat conservative farmers trooped into Democratic ranks. Despite the defeats that followed, including the merited one of 1904 when the Democrats retreated into a platform more conservative than their opponents', the coalition held and was successful in 1912. In 1916 it demonstrated the new geography of American politics when Woodrow Wilson won without the support of any of the states with heavy electoral votes.

The Southern-progressive-agrarian coalition of Wilsonian days disintegrated, but by 1932 a new coalition had been established. It is described by its critics as a combination of the South, the labor unions, the city machines, and the intellectual Left. Not a wholly accurate description, it will serve. The coalition was fashioned by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who was a political genius of the first order.

2

THE death of President Roosevelt, the end of World War II, the growing tensions within the Democratic Party, and the world-wide feeling of insecurity present three questions about American politics. Can the Democratic Party win in 1948? Will the Democratic Party hold together? If it does not, what will happen?

It is asserted that labor is sulkily disappointed, that the South is in revolt, that the city organizations are languid, and that the intellectual leftists or leftist intellectuals have abandoned the Democratic Party altogether. Those assertions require objective examination.

There is the labor lassitude. The leaders of the great unions, and the men and women who work on assembly lines and in thousands of other occupations, are supposed to be indifferent to the success of the Democratic ticket in 1948.

Actually, labor organizations and individual members of unions, as well as unorganized workers generally, are exceptionally concerned about the

result this fall. Only the very youngest workers, those below the mid-twenties in age, fail to remember the Depression. For most of those who are just at the thirty level, including those who went through five years of war, the memory of the soup kitchens and the bread lines is more lasting than the memory of the war. The memory of joblessness and of the foreclosures that swept home ownership to the lowest level in American history by 1932 is keen among the older group. Emotionally, if not wholly logically, they associate "Depression" with "Republican."

Practically, their leaders must get them to the polls for the all-important Congressional elections. Except for a few unions that have the status of "company unions" because they serve monopolies and whose leadership is Republican, and a few idealistic doctrinaires who dream of a genuine American Labor Party, and a handful of yet unpurged Commies who want a reactionary Congress in 1949, labor leaders are united in a determination not to elect a Taft-Hartley Congress.

It is impossible for labor organizations to get their members to the polls in the Congressional races without getting them to the polls to vote for Presidential electors. Labor will not bolt the Democratic Party to vote for Governor Dewey.

Republican enthusiasm over the campaign of Henry A. Wallace had become muted by the time of the National Convention. It was the New Party that killed the chance of Senator Taft for the nomination and compelled the unenthusiastic acceptance of a previously defeated candidate, in defiance of party tradition that no Republican who loses shall ever be given a second chance.

Labor is not excited about the New Party. Unorganized workers, whether in white collars or shirt sleeves, have slightly greater inclination to vote for Mr. Wallace than do the men and women in unions, but it is their personal tribute to the candidate and his deep human sympathies that veers them in his direction, and this transient emotion does not sway any decisive number.

The actual voting strength for the Wallace party will come from another source. It will come from the grain-belt states, and chiefly from the women of those states. They are keenly aware of the bitter failures of our bipartisan foreign policy; they are often unaware of its successes. They object deeply and, so far as the original plan presented is concerned, with very good reason, to UMT and the establishment of a military republic to supplant American democracy. They understand that, whether some Communists and fellow travelers may or may not be active in Henry Wallace's campaign, he is a man of abiding sincerity. Perhaps his ideas are somewhat naïve; perhaps they are tinged with mysticism; but they attract those who are understandably urgent in their emotional bias against war and bitterness and hunger.

It is from those sources that the New Party will obtain its four million votes, and some 60 per cent of those votes will come squarely off the Republican ticket. Except on the Pacific Coast, the Democrats will lose few votes that will affect the Electoral College results, while the Republicans will be affected in those states where the Dewey-Warren ticket needs votes the most.

As for the defection from the Democratic Party of the class that the critics, somewhat snidely, call "intellectual leftists," little can be noted. This group, comprised of the brilliant younger men who entered government during the days when the New Deal was engaged in domestic reforms of the utmost magnitude, and of those who share their thought, play with Americans for Democratic Action and other such ideas, and voice their disappointment. But unlike the disillusioned young men of 1920, who either avoided the polls or cast a protest vote for Eugene Debs because of their disgust with the Mitchell Palmer outrages, in disregard of the excellent liberal record of Governor Cox, they will not leave the Democratic Party.

3

THEN there is the South, which is in revolt as it always is in Presidential years. This time the revolt may be serious enough to cost the Democrats the electoral votes of two or three states, if the men who managed the revolt have their way and the unfortunate politicians whom they have selected as their victims do not escape in some fashion.

The politics of the South is little understood by the rest of the country. The connection between the Dixiecrat Party and the struggle for ownership of the tideland oil reserves was adequately exposed by the *Atlanta Constitution*, which declared that oil lobbyists staged and controlled the Dixiecrat Convention at Birmingham and manipulated its steering and platform committees like puppets. The difficulties of Southern liberals have been revealed often enough in their own outpourings and in more dispassionate accounts of their efforts to eliminate outside domination of Southern politics.

As conditions now exist, the votes of Alabama, a state which has relapsed into the control of the absentee owners of its natural resources, and of Mississippi, almost certainly will be cast for a Dixiecrat nominee. Those of Georgia, perhaps, may be wasted in some other fashion, if a plot to keep the electors from being committed to the Democratic Party's nominee can succeed. In South Carolina, the Dixiecrat nominee is the Governor of the state. All other states of the South are safely Democratic under all conditions.

The liberals of the South are annoyed with the submission of some of the so-called "civil rights" measures by President Truman. They forced the elimination of the poll tax in Louisiana and Georgia

— and for that matter, in Tennessee, though a legal technicality restored it. They recognize the futility of such measures as the Fair Employment Practices Law in improving the economic status of the Southern Negro. They have compelled adoption of measures that give to all citizens of many Southern states better schools, better health services, and more adequate public welfare benefits. But they are not going to leave the Democratic Party, because they have nowhere else to go. Neither has the South.

Governor Dewey has seen to that, by his opposition to any readjustment of the freight rate discriminations against Southern industry and by his view — for when he speaks openly upon a subject he speaks fully and frankly, it must be said — that the Southern and Western states are suitable only for economic exploitation.

Governor Dewey's views were adequately summarized in his written statement of March 29, 1943, to the Interstate Commerce Commission, protesting against any proposal to readjust and equalize freight rates as ordered by the Congress: —

This would mean an increase in the cost of producing and manufacturing goods manufactured in New York State, which would make it more difficult for concerns to manufacture in New York State and make it more attractive for them to shift their manufacturing operations to the South. . . . New York did not create the present rate structure. Industries have located, workers have made their homes in reliance upon the present rate structure. . . . I insist that the rate structure should not be changed.

The Southern liberals, looking at Republican sponsorship of the Bulwinkle-Reed Bill, which allows transportation companies exemption from the laws against conspiracy in restraint of trade, and considering the financial backing of the Dixiecrat Party, regard the 1948 Republican ticket as a marriage of the transportation monopoly to the grabbers of the tideland oil fields. Other Southerners have other views, but they are views that will compel them to vote the Truman-Barkley ticket. Habit is one of these; the Democratic Party has been the Southern party all their lives. Selfishness is another; the South has known no prosperity since the War Between the States, except under the Wilson and Roosevelt-Truman administrations. Perhaps political cowardice is a third.

Except for a very few politicians, whom the backers of the Dixiecrat Party undoubtedly regard as expendable, there is nobody in Southern politics who wants to invite annihilation. They recall what happened, for example, in North Carolina as an aftermath of the 1928 Hoovercrat secession from the party: Senator Furnifold Simmons, possessor of the ablest political mind and the toughest political machine in the state's history, was wiped out overnight because he joined in the bolt against Alfred E. Smith. It will be far less surprising if the Alabama

and Mississippi electors come back into the Democratic fold than if there is additional Southern bolting.

4

AN ACTUAL examination of the asserted liabilities of the Democratic Party, other than the supposed revolts of the South, labor, New Dealers, and city bosses, is an essential preliminary to any evaluation of the election chances of Harry S. Truman or any prediction of the future of the Democrats.

The greatest liability is the party's long tenure of office. Sixteen years in power has aged its leadership. President Truman, himself a veteran of politics, has shown a tendency to select advisers and to make appointments from the older group. The men coming up have had their enthusiasm dulled by the feeling that there was no opportunity for advancement.

Likewise the long tenure of the Democrats in power has emphasized the tensions within the party. In the Congress, it has placed committee dominance in many instances in the hands of individuals who have few qualifications except that they come from safe districts. That is a definite liability, which the party's leadership would do well to admit and to correct. But it cannot cost an election. It functions only to handicap the party organization, to slow down the making of decisions, and to reduce the quality of secondary administrative chiefs to the approximate level always maintained, except under Theodore Roosevelt, by the Republican Party. It is a liability of the party, but not one with which too many of the voters are actively concerned.

The public is concerned first with the cost of living and second with the problem of housing. But the rising cost of living is associated in the minds of most of the public with the election of a Republican Congress in 1946. The average voter accepts the theory of Republican responsibility for inflation, the elimination of all price controls and of the orderly allotment of primary materials, and the faulty tax reduction program that channeled most surpluses into the reserves of large corporations.

The public recognizes the responsibility of the Republican Party for the failure to meet the housing requirements of the people. In the public mind the successes of the Home Owners' Loan Corporation and the Federal Housing Administration are identified with the Democratic Party. Perhaps it is an emotional bias that speaks in their minds, but they remember that America was well on the way toward widespread home ownership when the war interrupted the New Deal's housing program. President Truman has insisted repeatedly upon the adoption of a housing program; the inhabitants of trailer camps, the young people now doubling up with relatives, and the white-collar class that has seen housing prices rise completely beyond its

means hold the Republican Party responsible for their plight.

On the issue of foreign policy, the Republicans can make no campaign. The policy has been bipartisan. Many Democrats will agree that President Truman may have been mistaken in making it so. The ultra-conservative infiltration can be held responsible for every mistake: for the disgraceful and cowardly attack upon fundamental liberties in Greece; for the condoning of Perón; for the retention all too long of the moronic little King of Italy; for the confused policy as to Palestine. What diplomatic victories America has won have come from following an altogether different line, which was realistic rather than expedient. The curtain of secrecy that surrounds the making of foreign policy is as much a Republican responsibility as it is a Democratic responsibility. But in the public mind it is a much greater liability.

Acceptance of reactionary participation in the making of foreign policy and the removal of foreign policy improperly from the sphere of public discussion and political determination was forced upon President Truman by well-meaning advisers of both parties, who pointed out to him the refusal of the reactionary leadership of 1918 to follow the policies of the American chief of state. That the crisis in the conduct of American foreign policy after World War I was due partly to President Wilson's unwisdom in making it a personal rather than a party issue and to his own physical collapse, literally on the eve of a popular victory, was overlooked in the fear that paralysis would overtake the conduct of American foreign policy unless it was determined by compromise.

The want of foresight of President Truman in accepting Republican interference in the conduct of diplomacy was more than matched by the impropriety of Republican participation in such counsels. It was an act of political immorality that it is impossible to condone. The conduct of our relations with foreign countries, the mighty issues of war and peace, and the question of national and individual survival should be determined by the people. The conduct of diplomacy through a dilution of policy masquerading as coöperation is dangerous, unconstitutional, and unwise. The participation, at any policy-making level, of any representative of the opposition party in the conduct of any Federal agency except those relating exclusively to the armed services is effrontery. If the opposition party accepts the foreign policy of the Chief Executive, as it should if that policy is wise, no issue exists upon that subject to submit to the people in an election; if it does not concur, it is its duty to criticize and thereby enlighten the public, so that the question may be settled at the ballot-boxes.

The Republican Party, by its discovered disingenuousness in accepting a part in the framing of American diplomatic policies, is properly barred

from any criticism of any failures, for which it is bound to accept completely all responsibility, and is estopped from claiming any share in the successes. This is a harsh stricture, though eminently fair under the rules of logic and the common law, which holds that a trespasser is entitled to no compensation for improvements upon property but is liable for any damage that he may do. It is also justified by the record of muddling since the death of President Roosevelt. The bipartisan dilution of the Roosevelt European policy is a Republican responsibility. Broadly based democratic regimes were contemplated by Mr. Roosevelt in all liberated Europe. Democracy's most effective bulwark against Communism was recognized to be the democratic elements in the free nations, and the expatriated reactionaries who had fled or collaborated with Nazis deserve no American support. The Republican Party has forced on President Truman, through the myth of "bipartisan policy-making," mistakes hardly less deplorable than the disgraceful and cynical utilization of American armed forces in Central America in the Coolidge days.

Mr. Truman unquestionably must share with his bipartisan advisers some part of the responsibility for the not infrequent ineptitudes of the tea-toting wonder boys and senile brass-hats that have been forced upon the American people as representatives abroad in all too many instances. Instead of being deluded by the myth of non-political and bipartisan conduct of some phases of public affairs, he might have recalled that a very good case can be made out for the claim that the seeds of World War II were sown when Herbert Henry Asquith, then Prime Minister of Great Britain, succumbed to the blandishment of the Tories and admitted them to the war cabinet.

The historic role of the Republican Party, from the Caribbean scandals of the Grant administration so eloquently denounced by Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, through the outrages that marked our enslavement of the Philippines, to the era of unprovoked invasion of Nicaragua, has been one of support to the worst reactionary groups abroad. It inspires no confidence in the American people today.

Much of the campaign of 1948 must revolve around the personalities of the candidates of the two major parties.

Harry S. Truman's stock, as quoted in the popularity polls, has shown an unusually wide fluctuation. He is liked by Americans because he is one of themselves; he is disliked by Americans because he is not a strong leader in the Rooseveltian sense, when those hours come when they feel the need for strength. He has an excellent record, according to liberal statistics; but many liberals fear his devotion to the political party that he heads; yet, paradoxically, some party stalwarts fear that his liberalism causes him to forget some of the exigencies of party

manipulation. His formal speeches lack the polish and the masterful delivery of his predecessor; his informal speeches sound like George Babbitt addressing a luncheon club. Then suddenly the realization arrives that this man is very typical of America, and that the criticism of him is the self-criticism of Americans, and that on an election day they are very likely to vote for one of themselves.

They do not feel that way about the present Governor of New York.

5

CONSIDERED objectively, it is difficult to forecast the election results of November, 1948, except for the near-certainty that the Democrats will regain control of the Senate. It is quite possible that Governor Dewey could win the Presidency, while losing for his party both branches of Congress. It is equally possible that President Truman might win, while the Democrats either lose the House or win it by so narrow a margin that their control will be nominal rather than effective. The outlook for effective coöperation between the Congress and the Executive would seem slightly better if the Democrats win, but inevitable political realignments must occur in America before the Congressional elections of 1950. Consideration of these raises the question of the future of the Democratic Party, whether it wins or loses this November.

The final adoption in 1804 of the Twelfth Amendment to the Federal Constitution acknowledged a profound change in the form of American government. It recognized the position of the President of the United States as a party leader. In effect, it provided that the United States should have a two-party system of government.

It is fundamentally because of the Twelfth Amendment, which provides for the separate election of a President and a Vice-President by the Electoral College, that no third-party movement has been possible in the United States. Either the new party must swallow up one of the old parties, as the Republican Party formed by a merger of free-soilers and abolitionists swallowed up the ineffective Whig organization, or it must represent nothing more than a temporary party of protest like the Populist, the Bull Moose, and the La Follette Progressive.

No one recognizes this constitutionally impelled political design more fully than does Senator Robert A. Taft. It is possible to disagree with his apparent premise, derived not from his father but from the Bull Moose doctrinaires, that the time of America's maturity has been reached and that American frontiers are exhausted; it is not possible to discount either his sincerity or the logical manner in which he has sought to make the Republican Party over into a coalition of the privileged industrialists, the larger

farmers, and the to-be-subsidized completely dispossessed. That is a reasonable assumption for anyone who believes that America must now be divided along caste and economic lines alone into a Right and a Left.

If the Democrats should lose the 1948 election by a heavy margin, and if the New Party should achieve some six million votes that would record unanticipated gains in industrial centers, it is possible that a serious attempt at the organization of a new party might be undertaken. Walter Reuther, with his mildly socialist viewpoint and his unquestioned adherence to constitutional democracy, might find it possible to organize the equivalent of an American Labor Party. It could not hope to win the 1952 election, but it might be the winner in 1956.

If the Democrats should lose narrowly, regaining control of the Senate, the reorganization of the party would be inevitable. Younger leaders would emerge. Labor and Southern and Western states would be courted more effectively. The party would be revitalized and would return to power after a four-year lapse.

Much the same thing would happen to the Democrats if they win this fall. They would adjust their internal differences. Dissidents, who remained silent during the Roosevelt period, would be disciplined. The Democratic Party would settle down to a long period of uninterrupted control over both the executive and legislative branches of government.

Some long-needed reforms would be introduced into government. Unquestionably the seniority system in the committees of Congress would be eliminated, thus improving representative government. Compelled to recognize the realities of American geography, industrial and political alike, the Southern and Western states would receive a full measure of justice, as Franklin D. Roosevelt had planned for them when the war interrupted the domestic reforms of the New Deal. Monopoly would be curbed by more rigid enforcement of the Sherman and Clayton Acts, and the exemptions from those measures provided by the most recent Congress would be repealed. If the Democratic victory were large enough, President Truman would be enabled to reassert the basic American doctrine of party responsibility in the conduct of foreign affairs.

The surprising response of Democrats and average voters to the acceptance speech of President Truman at Philadelphia may be the clue to the outcome and to the future. It did not have the eloquence of the 1933 Inaugural; it was a different kind of speech: it was a speech by Average American suddenly conscious of his responsibilities and of his own resources with which to meet them. It had a ring of confidence.

Borneo

A tall, slender Californian happily married to Harry Keith, the Conservator of Forests and Director of Agriculture of North Borneo, AGNES NEWTON KEITH is the author of two books: Land Below the Wind, which won the Atlantic Nonfiction Prize in 1939, and Three Came Home, the story of her captivity as a Japanese prisoner of war with her young son George. When Mrs. Keith returned to the States in 1946, she weighed eighty-seven pounds, her arm had been broken, her ribs kicked in. A year later, she and George went back to North Borneo to stand by Harry in the bitter toil of reconstruction.

WHITE MAN RETURNS

by AGNES NEWTON KEITH

1

SEVENTY years ago this town was known as Elopura — meaning, in Sanskrit, “Beautiful City”; now it is Sandakan, North Borneo, officially described as “the worst-destroyed town in the Far East.” The land of which Sandakan is the capital is rich in timber, gold, copper, and coal; with swift-running waterways, white rapids, heavy jungle, and mountains like sleeping women outlined against the sky; and a moon, on hot silent nights, like an oversize copper ball floating in blue-ink air, and a sea like a painted picture of a tropical island sea.

This primitive country was peopled by simple savages and unsophisticated pagan tribes; men who took heads, burned villages, plundered traders, sank ships, and scuppered each other — as simply as that. Then the white man came. The natives were preserved like game and ripe peaches by the colonizing British, who pride themselves on kindness to simple savages and preservation of old tribal custom. But the towns along the coast were gradually settled with Chinese, Javanese, Indians, and Malays, who understood trading for food and living, while the natives fished, hunted, and killed for theirs.

Then the yellow man came — in 1942. With him came war, and four years of Asiatic rule for Asiatics, of semi-civilization, of moral dissolution and physical desolation. At the end of that period the country had been occupied by Japanese shock troops, held by Japanese *Kempetai*, raped by Japanese bums, burned by Japanese zealots, bombed by the Allies, liberated by the Australians, reoccupied by Tin Hats and Brass.

By the time of the Armistice in 1945 the jungle had closed over the charred town site of Sandakan and few ruins could be seen. The surviving populace had moved to the jungle or to small islands in the bay, the women slept with by all and married by none, the widows left without weeds, the orphans without names.

Then the news went round that the war was over and succor was near. People moved back to the weed-choked ruins, the British returned, the flag flew high, the soldier ruled, relief ships came. Soon bully beef and fur coats, vitamin tablets and pink satin slips, high-heeled slippers and woolly pajamas, stale plasma and fresh tomato juice, white face-powder and black sea-boots, malaria prophylactics and frostbite medicaments, arrived without prejudice to arctic or tropic, sent by relief agencies from half the world away. A town sprang up out of the ashes and jungle, out of the bones and bombs; Sandakan, once Beautiful City, came back to the white man's rule.

But this wasn't a soldier's job; the soldiers wanted to go home, the Administration wanted to go, everybody wanted them to go. The civil servants under the Chartered Company of British North Borneo, who had run the country before the war and made a good job of it, had been in Jap prison camps; those who survived had had only a few months of freedom; they didn't want to come back.

Yet they came. My husband had been Conservator of Forests for North Borneo under the Chartered Company for some years before the war; our life was here, our son was born here, we had lost our home and household goods here, been pauperized and placed in slavery, and confined four years in Jap prison camps here. When I was flown out of Borneo in a U.S. Navy Catalina in September, 1945, I hoped never to see the country again. Harry agreed with me; we'd had it.

But in May, 1946, because of the urgent necessity to re-establish a civil administration of men who knew the country and the people, in order to deal with the emergency of a starving, 90 per cent ill, unclothed, and homeless population, Harry agreed to return to Borneo. In July, 1947, North Borneo became a Colony and he was transferred to Colonial service.

The month before, I had started my journey back to Borneo with George, our eight-year-old son, who was born in Sandakan and imprisoned with me through the war. Leaving Tacoma, Washington, one black and starry night, with the wind from the cool Olympics behind us and the steam of the tropics ahead, and traveling as swiftly as connections allowed, we arrived back in Sandakan in October, thus having accomplished a slightly slower journey than British adventurers made in the 1800's.

2

WHEN I first arrived in North Borneo fourteen years ago, an American bride, I was anxious to meet my English husband's friends, and hoping to please. Although I could not speak or spell English, I had managed to communicate for some years in the United States by a series of short, sharp, nasal Mid-west American syllables; these I now hoped to dampen with the foggy dew of an English accent; I was going to give up "got" and "Geel" and spell everything with an extra *u*; I was ready to lengthen my shorts and to lighten my make-up; to use water for bathing only, otherwise tea, whiskey, or gin; and to love dogs and horses, tolerate children and hate foxes, in order to please. That I unconsciously hid beneath my raincoat the one really vital, sure-fire attribute for success in Far East Colonial life, I did not know then — a white skin. I soon found that this alone entitled me to a position among the elite.

Nine years later I left this town a prisoner in rags, starving and ill-treated, under Japanese rule — a position to which my white skin entitled me then.

Now I return; the country is again British, my skin still white, my position enviable; but my faith in the invincibility of color is dead. It is convenient to be white, but not sufficient, and credit is due only to chromosomes; it is nice to belong to the ruling race, but is it the ruling race? I remember it when it wasn't.

So I speak without racial prejudice, or a belief in the *Herrenvolk*, when I say that the brown races to whom this country belongs, the aborigines of North Borneo, are not ready to govern themselves and are better off under us. We do not do much for them, God knows: a dollop of medicine, a pinch of hygiene, a sniff of education, a whiff of prosperity, large schemes and limited action, an exposition of the theory of Christianity accompanied by feeble practice, an honest administration of justice, the wash-out of crime compared to other Eastern places, and the import of rice by international agreement for a non-self-supporting and very hungry people — not much, God knows, but it's more than these people can do for themselves. It is not their skins, but their minds and manner of thought and their

values, which must change through future years of social evolution.

At present the native of Borneo has no national concept, much less world concept, because he can't think that big; he doesn't know that he has a country because he can't see that far. His farthest horizon is the pig under his house, the outermost tree in his clearing, the footpath over the mountain which he treads twice a year to the nearest village for salt.

The rugged and unmodified topography of this country, its heavy jungle, swift rapids, untraversable swampland, and untracked hogback mountains, plus the heavy rainfalls averaging 75 to 150 inches a year, result in a lack of roads and communications, transport and education. The pagan tribes of the interior and plains, the Moslem tribes along the coasts, all said to be of Indonesian-Polynesian-Mongoloid origin, keep alive today the ancient heritage of a simple, savage, archaic people. An interior Rundum Murut dressed simply and solely in his cardinal red loincloth, his teeth filed to the gums for purposes of beautification, his incisors knocked out to admit his poison-dart blowpipe, his gums dripping red saliva from the juice of the betel nut he chews, his long, lank black hair hanging down to his small-buttocked behind, would occasion comment even in Hollywood.

There are five principal native tribes in North Borneo: the Dusun, Murut, Bajau, Suluk, and Dayak tribes. All these tribes speak different dialects, have no common spoken language, and no written language at all. Each tribe has different tribal customs; the only things they have in common are dark skins, bad habits, and primitiveness.

Government vernacular schools teach Malay, which is the nearest thing to a common language here, and mission schools teach English to those who can and will attend. On figures based on the last local education report it appears that one native child out of every ten goes to school long enough to be registered, but observation leads me to say that not one out of one hundred acquires any education.

Borneo, unlike the Dutch East Indies and Malaya, where education, wealth, and ensuing leisure are widespread, has no native intelligentsia. There is no moneyed class among the natives, as a man's wealth is in his personal possessions — his dogs, pigs, buffalo, blowpipes, weapons, brass, and wives. No rich men's sons go from Borneo to foreign universities.

Current anthropology suggests that the aborigines of North Borneo are growing decadent and impotent because of the interference with their tribal customs. To this theory current medicine adds a postscript that malaria, dysentery, tuberculosis, and continued malnutrition caused by drinking their rice crop in home-brew instead of eating it, and ignorance of hygiene, probably contribute more

to infertility and high mortality than the suppression of their head-hunting desires.

These people are a link between ourselves and the past, but a link which makes the past seem further. To deal with them, and at the same time in the same world to cope with atomic energy, modern bacteriology, the United Nations, Trygve Lie, and Einstein, is fantastic. As against me and modern methods, the natives win hands down; they have more germs than I have disinfectant, more lethargy than I have energy. The more I know of aborigines the less I know, and I suspect that only time, unhurried and unbeatable, will tell on them.

But time will tell. And meanwhile it was an Englishman, Gladstone, who said, Liberty alone prepares men for liberty. These primitive people here have more liberty under the British to prepare themselves for liberty than they would have if the white man moved out and the yellow man moved in.

3

SANDAKAN is as foreign and inaccessible to the average Borneo native as it was to me when I came from the U.S.A. It is a city inhabited principally by foreigners, the majority being Chinese, with Indians, Javanese, Filipinos, natives, and Malays mixed in. The apex of civilization is represented by the movie palace, which regularly shows *Tarzan of the Apes*, in a country of apes, to full houses. The nadir is the sewer system, which is simply the Sulu Sea; visitors always ask what those cute little houses over the water are.

The sea is also our bathtub, our suburbs are built on stilts over it, and children fish for breakfast from their verandas in it. The jungle grows to the gardens' edges; bananas, coconuts, and pineapples ripen all the year; greens and beans flourish; fishermen catch their living in the sea; and water buffalo give milk, furnish steaks, and draw carts.

In town the Chinese shopkeepers begin again to make money; the lean-shanked Indians barter in the bazaar; Filipinos pound broken-down typewriters in wilted white collar jobs; the Malays laugh and dance and live on love, and the sojourning natives joke, drink, and add local color. In all there are perhaps twenty-five thousand Asiatics in Sandakan, a considerable increase over the pre-war population, while the European population remains as before, about seventy British and one American. Of this group Harry and I are known as *The Oldest Living Inhabitants*. People who live long in the East acquire a tropical neurasthenia which makes three on a desert island seem a crowd. To this "Alone" disease Harry and I have now added the ex-internee's complex against any form of community living, a prejudice which makes the open stretches of Borneo desirable.

Only a small minority of the present Asiatic residents are pre-war survivors. These few, by

hiding in the jungle at each alarm, or retreating to the interior, have survived the process of slaughter but not the loss of possessions and health. The majority of today's townspeople have but recently moved in from China and other revolution-worn countries to seek the peace, security, and better living conditions of a British Colony.

Some of these newcomers to Sandakan have money, and of course they are said to have been collaborators, as is everyone in the East who has anything now. But the large majority are without resources and in need of drugs, food, clothing, housing, and education. They are cheerful, uncomplaining, brave; and they are implacable, stubborn, and poor as only Asiatics know how to be. For there is work here, and they will not do it; they have lived with destruction too long. They haven't the energy, the vision, the future, the vitamins and vim to see a job and do it. And if there is no rice to work for, what is the object of working?

The greatest hardship today is shortage of rice, the mainstay of the Asiatic diet. The ration is about one half what the coolie is satisfied to work on. Sandakan district is not suited to the production of rice. But the import of all Far Eastern rice is regulated by international food agreements which are based on other ideas of rice sufficiency than the Asiatic's. Tapioca root and various tubers are being promoted unsuccessfully as substitutes by expert dietitians who say they are better for the health than rice. The Asiatic answer is simply, No rice, no work. After living two years on tapioca root in prison camp I sympathize; one may re-educate the digestive tract, with pain and wind, in a lifetime, but not the psychological attitude of many lifetimes which have decreed to the Asiatic that rice is the staff of life.

This is not an easy country to regiment or reform; there is too much to do, too little to do with, and nobody who wants it done. Rather, it is a place to give freely and expect no return. It is a place to give for the reason that when such inequality exists between two ways of life as exists here between my way and that of a native or coolie it eases my conscience to give, but not because the coolie will thank me, love me, or cease to defecate in front of my house.

Yet I have never found kindness lacking here. I existed for three and one-half years during the war on the charity of Asiatic friends, but this was not based on feelings of obligation to me for the past, and today it is I who owe them.

Take our friend Ah Leong. He is an old Chinese coolie who has carried our luggage up to our house from the customs wharf all the years we have lived here, back and forth on every home leave, and every local trip we ever made. Ah Leong and we have always discussed each other's children together, our home "villages," our illnesses, and our businesses. We have had confidence in each other; we that he

would never lose our luggage, even the paper parcels; and he that we would never take a younger, swifter coolie.

During the Japanese occupation of this country I saw him just once. This time I was the coolie-prisoner dragging a suitcase, bedding roll, and baby, and trying to lift them to a ship's deck three feet from the wharf and three feet above it, while Japanese officers stood laughingly by. Seeing me struggling alone Ah Leong came running to assist me, and was knocked down by the butt of a Japanese rifle.

Five years later I returned to Sandakan a free woman. Harry and I were walking along the sandy path towards the native village of Keramunting, with George racing far ahead along the beach, when we heard a voice shouting after us in Chinese-Malay, and steps running. We looked behind us and saw a figure in sackcloth underpants and a frayed straw hat without a crown, and under the hat a face that was glowing with gold teeth and glad greetings. It was Ah Leong, and we were as valued old friends meeting again after long adversity. We learned that an American bullet had shot off his toe, he had rheumatism and had stopped carrying luggage, he lived at Keramunting and fished for a living, the Japs had been very bad here, the children were growing up, we were all growing older. And then came the important question, "And where is your baby, Mem?" — the baby whom he had last seen tied on my back when I was a prisoner.

I pointed ahead at George's long-legged figure, which was loping back towards us now; George had seen us talking, and feared he might be missing something. Ah Leong shouted in delight, "Wah! That big strong boy? Wah! Very good, very good!" And he and George stood and stared at each other with flattering interest.

Early one morning a week later when I was driving home from Harry's office Ah Leong ran out from the side of the road. Brandishing his arms in front of me like a wind-driven scarecrow, he took a stand in the middle of the road, with more confidence in our brakes than I have. I swerved around him and skidded into the drain. He came after me, and leaning informally over the hood of the car, he inserted his smiling, gold-toothed face through the open windscreen and looked over the interior of the car carefully. Ours is an English make, petrol-saver, about the size of George's pre-war pram, and Ah Leong's masterful attitude towards it led me to believe that he was going to offer to pick it up and carry it home for me. However, he was only trying to locate George in some corner.

"Where is that boy, Mem?"

"George is at his father's office. Today is a school holiday, and he is going fishing."

"Wah! That is good! That boy is very big and fine! I have brought him this basket of *bokara* to eat," and he dumped a basketful of live crayfish into the bottom of the motorcar at my feet.

It was a good catch, and worth several dollars, and Ah Leong had walked three miles from his village to waylay me on my homeward route with it. I accepted the crayfish with gratitude and thanks. I was driving the motorcar; he was the coolie on the road.

Ah Leong has no obligation to us for the past, he always gave value for payment received. The only thing we ever gave him in excess of his fee was the recognition that he was human.

4

THE people of Sandakan need almost everything, but the least of these things is probably tatted handkerchiefs. Infants are vestless, babies are pantless, boys without drawers, adults without shirts; bachelors need mending, beds need bedding, houses need curtains; but my friend Angela tats tatting for handkerchiefs.

Angela, who is a pre-war survivor, makes the pilgrimage up the hill to me once a week, when the day is hottest and she looks limpest and I can feel sorriest, and my pile of handkerchiefs grows. Once innocent little pieces of cotton goods, now they are made expensively offensive through Angela's art, for the wiping of European noses. Harry thinks that I buy them from the inability to say No. But I do not; I buy them deliberately, in the name of democracy and the memory of bananas.

Angela, whose ancestry is Goanese and Filipino, is nice to look at and titillating to the senses; with eyes like chocolate drops on white frosted cake, and skin like a *bisque meringue*, she was created by nature to sweeten rather than sustain. To her natural confiture of being, Angela adds lipstick lips and fuchsia cheeks, a peasant blouse and a dirndl skirt and blue barefoot sandals on spindle legs. She weighs like a toothpick and is shaped like a child, but her amorous glance holds an adult lure.

Angela's life is pursued by a dark-browed Fate. Her husband is always out of work, her relatives break their bones, her babies have colds, her childbirth is complicated, her miscarriages are never convenient, and her dwelling places are robbed, burned, or blown away, but Angela retains her adolescent figure, her baby face, and her ingenuous mind.

Her reaction to the cruel Nemesis which pursues her is to embrace it with the resignation of a girl for a too brutal lover who, if he hurts her, at least leaves her with something to talk about. And as if to compensate for her domestic ill luck, Angela buys raffle tickets and wins prizes of face creams and powder compacts, she bets on horses and wins silver trophies, she enters dancing competitions in the Eurasian club and brings to her devastated and adversity-stricken home silver-plated mugs, embroidered tray tidies, and cut-glass cocktail shakers.

Angela comes to our house either at 10 A.M. when I am writing, or 3 P.M. when I am bathing. At either

hour I would give anything to be rid of her, especially before my husband comes. But today is the third anniversary of the decapitation of Angela's father by the Japanese, and Angela comes this morning to review the scene again.

"It was after the American motor torpedo boats came to Sandakan on May 26, in 1945," Angela recalls. "They shelled and torpedoed the harbor and town and the Japanese ran away into the jungle. The Americans landed and came into town, and people rejoiced and were very glad to see them and gave them food and anything they wanted. My father was one to help them, and we were all happy because the Americans had come at last.

"But they went away again that night, and the Japs came back into town the next day. Then they asked all people in town to tell them who had helped those Americans. And the people who were afraid told on the others. A few had warning and ran to the jungle and escaped, but the Japs arrested sixty-seven others that night. They were some of the best people of the town, Indians, Chinese, and natives, and one was a white lady, Mrs. Feldheim, the Jewish lady who came from Germany before the war and was always sick.

"The Japs took them to *Kempetai* headquarters, and for many days the military police were asking them questions, and we did not know what would happen. Then one day we saw them all taken out in army trucks, and two of our men followed secretly to see. The trucks went up Ernestina Lane and stopped at the rubber trees, and the guards made everybody get out.

"Then they started to kill them. They tried to cut their heads off, but the soldier whose job this was, was not clever, and his sword not sharp enough. He killed some O.K., but others he could not make the heads come off, and even this soldier got sick with the mess. So then they had to shoot them. But the Japs were so confused by not killing neatly that one Chinese escaped.

"Mrs. Feldheim was very brave. She did not weep, she only prayed, until they killed her. My father was the last. He was buried with all the others, sixty-seven in one grave under the rubber trees on Ernestina Lane. So that was the end of my father." Angela stopped and drank her ginger beer.

I remembered her father well, a swarthy, gallant-mannered Goanese whom I had often talked with at Government House garden parties. We always talked of birds and flowers because one must at such parties, but in spite of synthetic horticulture he had registered in my memory as a man.

I remembered Mrs. Feldheim, a neurotic, undernourished little Jewess who had come to Borneo with her husband to seek refuge from the Nazis, and had buried him in this island, the victim of past brutalities; who had herself survived alone among Asiatics for two years after the other Europeans had been interned — only in the end to meet

the bungled sword blow and ill-aimed gun of a little executioner. In life her outstanding quality had been to evoke pity; now in death she commanded respect.

"What happened to your mother then, Angela?"

"Very soon then my mother goes crazy; all females in her family go crazy quite easily. So she must live at the Mad House at Buli Sim Sim. Then my sister Mabel gets tuberculosis, and all she does is cry and cry. Then my sister Mary gets rheumatic fever and she cries and cries.

"When the Japs came in 1942 I got married; it was not good for a girl to be alone then. So I married a Filipino boy, and I have a baby, and the baby is always weak because we have malaria and not enough food. Then the Japs kill my father, and my husband runs away from Sandakan to hide in the jungle.

"Then peace comes, those Australians come, and everybody thinks everything will be happy again. My husband comes in from the jungle and we get another baby, and this baby is sick also because I still have malaria and no medicine and no food and no cloth for clothes. The oil field opens at Seria again and my husband gets a job there and makes some money. But soon he gets sick and loses his job and we come back to Sandakan, and my mother comes out of the Mad House because she is not so crazy now, and she comes to live with me.

"Now my third sister, Elise, who used to work for the timber company, has lost her job because she can type but not good enough. So will you ask Mr. Keith if he would like her to do his typing?"

"Mr. Keith already has too many people who can type but not good enough. However, I'll tell him."

5

THE Mixed Blood Club, the rendezvous in town of Asiatics and Eurasians, with European Lady and Gent Patrons, is noted for its large oil-burning refrigerator which supplies cold drinks, and its large radio-gramophone which supplies hot music.

"Are you coming to the Saturday night dance at the Club, Mrs. Keith? I do not ever see you there."

"No, Angela, my husband will not go out much. I expect that you are going?"

"Yes, I shall be there and dance an exhibition tango with Mr. Minchen of the Singapore boat, if he is in port. We are clever dancers together. I am always popular with boat gentlemen; also with H.M.S. boats after the war when many came in to Sandakan. All petty officers call me Angela like old friends, and some of them still write to me. That is really my hobby now, writing letters to my pen friends. The stamps cost much money, but it is educational for me to have pen friends."

Pen friendships of English-writing Asiatics are vivid still in my memory of wartime censorship, and I would not have used the word "educational"

to describe them. I let the conversation drop, in the hope that Angela will leave, but she still has matters to impart to me.

Angela: "I shall have a new dress for the dance. It will be white with sequins purchased per yard by order from Singapore, and I shall wear my twenty-four-dollar shoes. They also are from Singapore with very high heels, and I cannot walk in them."

"Then how can you dance the tango in them?"

"That is different, and only for a short time. After my tango I remove them. Those shoes will make me taller like my friend of the Singapore boat, Mr. Minchen."

"Is he a good dancer?"

"Not as good as Mr. John Grant was. When he used to tango with me before the war, everybody admired us greatly. But now he is married. Do you know his wife? She is a beautiful Eurasian girl with skin much, much whiter than yours, and yellow hair all very curling."

The memory of Mr. John Grant is still green; he was a pre-war Anglo-Saxon product with gallant manners and lusty ways who did his best to go to bed with every pretty girl in town. The only pretty girls here are Asiatics; at home he might just have had fun, but here there is no fun; it's either intercourse or silence, bed or boredom. The pretty girls liked Mr. Grant, and didn't like boredom. Soon distracted parents were dispatching seductive daughters to the sticks, or marrying them off to boys of their own skins. Only the arrival of the Japanese with priority contracts, and the internment of Grant, saved interracial sin in the grand manner. Now Grant wears the conjugal yoke in submission; his gallantries live only in love-lore of Sandakan; the girls that he loved liked it, the ones that he missed regret it.

"How are your children now, Angela?"

"They have a little influenza now, and maybe a little tuberculosis. My family all has the T.B."

"Who takes care of the children when you are away selling handkerchiefs?"

"My mother takes them — she is not so crazy she cannot take care of a few babies."

"Here is the money for the handkerchiefs and a few dollars for your mother, and two tins of milk for the children. Now I must go back to my work."

"Thank you. I will tat you some more handkerchiefs soon."

"Couldn't you make some children's dresses instead? There are a number of babies that I would like to get some plain dresses for. I will supply you with the material if you will make them."

"No, Madam, I am not educated in plain sewing — only in the fancy stitches for making things beautiful."

With the milk tins in her hand, with the extra tatted handkerchiefs wrapped up in an American comic section, with her red rayon umbrella held

over her permanent wave and her expensive imported complexion, with her blue dirndl doodling about her spindle legs, Angela trips down the hill, a fragile figure of elegant incompetence.

And to me the memorial of her kind; of a class of persons here who by ill-birth and limited opportunity, in their incompetence, childishness, shortsightedness, and improvidence, were unable either to settle with the Japs for profit or to win with us. But people who, when we were starving behind Japanese barbed wire, were improvident and shortsighted enough to risk their lives to smuggle food to us; were childish enough to help our prisoners of war escape; and were incompetent enough to face a firing squad in our name.

During the war Angela smuggled food to me in prison camp; today she tats handkerchiefs. This salmon one with azure blue tatting is the tin of milk that came through the Jap guards and barbed wire on Berhala Island, our first prison, "For George from Angela." This green one with pink is the bunch of bananas which was hidden for us behind the latrine; this blue one with mauve is the dried prawns which arrived for us in the dark and rain. This bilious lavender with puce is the first letter smuggled to me from outside the wire, signed by a brown hand with the words, "We do not forget you, we are your friends."

With the proceeds of her tatting Angela will buy a new dress with which to dance the tango on some hot night in this hot town. The neon lights of the Mixed Blood Club will shine whitely on the gaudy best dresses of the Asiatic ladies, on the genteel best dresses of the European Lady Patrons, on the starched white cotton of the young Chinese, on the ultramarine shirts of Youth Filipino, on the loose checkered blouses of *Muda Malayu* — but not on the native of Borneo, who will not be there. Conversation is forced, fraternizing is awkward, Lady Patrons smile resolutely, Gents push to the bar for something stronger to ease their pain, and the gramophone plays.

Sitting barefoot in our house above the town we hear the music; Angela dances the tango, glittering in her sequins, her twenty-four-dollar shoes pinching her feet but adding inches to her stature, the powder on her dark face unbecoming but adding whiteness to her skin. Beyond, the glare of the neon lights up the dark, scented alleys of the town, her crazy mother dandles her sniffing children, her husband loafs, her neighbors gossip, and her house is burgled or burns.

Thus Angela. Yet between Angela and me there is only the accident of birth and opportunity. I write. Angela dances the tango. That is her contribution to graceful living, to cultural advancement, to Western civilization, in this little tear-spattered, blood-sodden, stinking-guttered, but not ignoble town.



DIXON WECTER has succeeded Bernard DeVoto as Literary Editor of the Mark Twain estate. In August of last year he and his wife made the trip by riverboat down the Mississippi with Mark's pilot book to help him pick up some of the old landmarks. Now he is back at his desk in the Huntington Library, where as Chairman of the Research Group he will continue his editing of the letters and papers of Mark Twain.

MARK TWAIN'S RIVER

by DIXON WECTER

1

MOST travelers today glimpse the Mississippi from railway or highway bridge as a swirling brown flood, or from the air as a huge glistening snake. Very few see the Lower Mississippi that wayfarers all knew a century ago. It is a thousand-mile procession of slowly caving banks, often crumbling visibly in the wash of a passing boat; smudges of low forest, cabins in the cotton, lagoons with cranes; dawns of river fog and sunsets of deep red and gold above the endless panoramic strip of water. And there are islands, bars, bends, and cutoffs with once familiar names like Hen and Chickens, Pair o' Dice, Hard Scrabble, Hole-in-the-Wall, Whiskey Chute, Shoofly Bar, Crablouse, Deadman Bend (where murdered men from the bawdyhouses of Natchez-under-the-Hill used to wash up).

Several million Americans who live in towns along the big river are ignorant of its reaches not flanked by motor roads. Several thousand more who live on the river itself know only pieces of it — these being the tribe of shanty-boaters, who moor to its banks their dilapidated houseboats, dodging life's responsibilities and taxes, fishing and loafing and appropriating the first six rows of corn or sugar cane in any riverside field, upon which they assert a kind of common-law claim.

Among several ways of seeing the Mississippi, the hardest is to build a raft and float downstream, the costliest to buy or rent a boat. The only passenger craft now plying between river ports are the Greene Line steamboats out of Cincinnati, owned by the celebrated Ma Greene, sole licensed master and first-class pilot of her sex in river history. A soft-spoken matriarch, who when not at the wheel is apt to be sewing for Presbyterian charities, Captain Greene bears no resemblance to Tugboat Annie. A trip on her fanciest boat, the rebuilt *Delta Queen*, is the most comfortable way of seeing the river. But the most interesting, I think, is a voyage such as my

wife and I made in August of last year, by towboat, behind a fleet of barges — called "the tow" despite the fact that it is pushed, not pulled. Since these boats never take paying guests — we bunked in quarters marked "Two Engineers" — this procedure demands a bit of luck. As for us, my wife was a friend of the owner's niece, and I with a Mark Twain job on my hands furnished a commodity in which I specialize — namely, a pretext.

At Louisville we loaded our car on one of these barges, and by towboat went down the Ohio to Cairo — pronounced, we soon learned, not as in Egypt but as in syrup — and then down the Mississippi to New Orleans. On the down trip nine miles an hour is good going; we made it in ten days. Upstream takes about three times as long.

It was wonderful for sunning, reading, contemplation, and sleep. To stand at the head of the tow, a quarter of a mile from the engines and out of earshot from either bank, borne soundlessly down the current, is pure hypnosis. Nights on the water are seldom hot, and mosquitoes seem to avoid mid-channel.

Meals are the happy diversion they always become on shipboard, save perhaps for breakfast, announced by a dinner bell rung at 5.30 A.M. all over the boat with sadistic satisfaction. Around a huge battery of condiments at the table's center appears a fabulous fare. Rivermen demand two kinds of meat and at least six vegetables at lunch and dinner with the accent upon favorites of the South like okra, black-eyed peas, hominy, grits. Hot biscuits too, harpooned by the crew with undisguised relish. Steamboat coffee is proverbial for strength and heat, at all hours of day and night. When the pilot blows a couple of short toots on the whistle, it signifies either that he wants to pass an approaching vessel on his starboard or that he wants coffee — the latter a slightly less grandiose blast — whereupon a mate comes running from the galley, across the main

deck and hurricane deck, up to the third deck (formerly texas), and thence to the pilothouse with a steaming cup. After a midnight emergency, like serious engine trouble or accidents to the tow, crewmen who have sweated it out will head for the galley to get food and drink from the patient women who cook — and are there joined by others who, according to the custom of crises, crowd in sleepy-eyed but eager to eat and share the excitement.

Most of the deck hands, and the first and second mate who straw-boss them, come from Southern river towns and farms, and in boyhood fell in love with the muddy water. They do not know the channel as pilots do, but almost every mile of the scenery is full of memories and interest. There is Cave In Rock on the Ohio, a once famous den of cutthroats which they are now clearing out for a state park; here is a spot above Golconda, Illinois, where a graybeard used to pop out of his house at every passing boat and wave a big American flag round and round his head as if crazy; and there on a bluff near Belmont Point, Missouri, a woman sometimes comes out on her porch stark naked to gesture to the fascinated crew, and small boats are said to have stopped to transact business; and here is the Arkansas village where our first mate, Brownie, grew up, although (as he says) he always went over to the next town to do his fighting, because the fines were cheaper. Our captain tolerates no drinking on board, and put ashore an oiler who had got pie-eyed — taking care, however, to send after him the set of dentures he lost with his dinner on the main deck. Our second mate Whitey, with platinum hair, white teeth, a friendly grin, and cap at a cocky angle, is an orphan of the Memphis waterfront, ex-soda-jerker and Marine Corps veteran, but says he is only eighteen; his declaration that his chief interests in life are “beer and women” leaves us skeptical. All belong to the National Maritime Union, swear by Joe Curran, but add, “We had a good union till the Communists came in and spoiled it.”

2

TODAY, unknown to most citizens, the Mississippi is carrying over ten times the volume of freight it bore in the heyday of the steamboats. It has come full circle, from barges to barges. When Napoleon sold the Louisiana Territory to Mr. Jefferson, its commerce moved by those massive barges called keelboats and broadhorns. Then came the age of steam and the glory of the packets, which slowly waned under competition from the railroads until by the eve of the First World War the river found itself almost empty. But two great wars and depression-born economies of the middle years, plus the Diesel engine, have brought back the barge as the river's dominant craft — now a great metal hull built to hold twelve hundred tons of iron pipe, steel rails, coal, sulphur, or a fleet of trucks. A dozen

barges of assorted sizes are lashed together by two-inch rope and steel cable (“lines” and “wires” respectively in the understatement of the river). This leaves only small interstices where they fail to dovetail, called “duck ponds,” in which the current boils like a whirlpool. These openings are the chief hazard to deck hands, who clamber all over the tow by day and night, inspecting cargo, tightening chains and ratchets, setting signal lights.

This caravan of barges, stretching a thousand feet and able to carry enough oil to fill a train of tank cars seven miles long, is shoved ahead by the “towing knees” of the comparatively small boat on which officers and crew live. The pilot, perched in his glass house, surveys the acres of heavy cargo thrust out before him like a monstrous snout. Its momentum, joined to the sweep of the current and often the wind, makes even his 1500 to 2500 horsepower Diesels seem puny. He learns the strategy of combining all these forces. To stop quickly or swerve abruptly is impossible, and of course in rounding a point — whatever the curve or visibility — he has to lead with his nose.

The decisions of the pilot of today are rarely the hair-trigger ones of the old packet-racing days, but may be no less crucial. And once made — in respect to passing another boat, sometimes in stormy weather, or running a ticklish bit of river, or shaving the concrete piers of a bridge — he may have to wait anxious minutes for the upshot. Like the old steamboat pilots, he knows how to ride the current downstream, and on the up trip to nose out the slack or “easy” water. But he must also master techniques developed by the towboat era, like “flanking,” which means backing the engines and utilizing the swing of the current to carry his cumbersome tow around a narrow bend.

An observer can gauge the approach of crisis by a pilot's behavior. When he smells it coming, he unwinds his legs that have been hitched over the levers, pushes back his swivel chair, and stands up to his job. When it bursts upon him suddenly, he kicks over the chair and freezes onto the controls. But always, whether the pilot is a college man or self-made deck hand, tobacco-chewer or total abstainer, he patronizes incessantly a noble brass spittoon that is carefully polished for him every day. A few new towboats sport among their pilot-house installations a dentist's cuspidor with running water, but this is manifestly effete.

Captain and pilot, who spell each other at the helm, are the heirs of those starchy boys known to every reader of *Life on the Mississippi*; the lords of the wheelhouse with their kid gloves and diamond breastpins, who ruled rococo palaces bearing names like “Morning Star,” “Belle of the Bends,” and “Great Republic.” Today's pilot wears a sweat shirt or sport shirt, but draws \$500 to \$600 a month, twice the wages of the old days — though needless to add they are shrunken dollars. In the absence of

passengers, and the absurdity of racing anything when pushing fifteen thousand tons of crude oil, the urge toward exhibitionism is gone. And the boat herself is no glamour girl, but a utilitarian drudge. She often bears her owner's name, sometimes a comic label like "Pollywog" or "Bulldog," or a battle name from early days of the last war — like "Coral Sea," "Guadalcanal," or (our boat) "Casablanca" — when many towboats were built to carry supplies to Gulf ports for North Africa and the Mediterranean. The fabulous old sternwheeler *Sprague*, for forty-five years known affectionately on the river as "Big Mama," has just retired, leaving her crown as most powerful towboat to the Federal Barge Line's new 3200 horsepower Diesel *Harry Truman*.

The master pilot who learns his steersman the river — the verb "to teach" being unknown in these parts — has a different problem on the Ohio. Seasonal low water has called forth an intricate system of locks, demanding delicate maneuvers between concrete wings and much patience when a long tow has to be broken apart and shoved through piecemeal. Yet the Ohio's green waters, flowing over a hard riverbed between banks that always seem companionably near, are not likely to betray a pilot who learned them months or years ago. But the Mississippi is a restless giant, forever tearing down, building, shifting its sandy channel. Often this is a process of simplification, where a bend is abandoned in favor of a cutoff, shortening the total mileage for navigation from port to port. Mark Twain predicted that this would go on until St. Louis found itself next door to New Orleans. An obstruction on the Ohio is apt to be submerged rock, but on the Mississippi a sand bar. Accidents on the Ohio are thus rarer but more serious. A few boats have been fitted with radar, to show up buoys, locks, chutes, bridges, reefs. Most pilots are doubtful, saying that radar can't "see" the channel, which is the main thing. But it will certainly lessen risks and delays from fog, which has usually meant tying up to a couple of big trees on the bank.

Our sole mishap occurred midway between Greenville and Vicksburg one night, by the light of a red quarter moon. Having pestered the captain for hundreds of miles about places mentioned in Mark Twain's apprentice book, we finally asked about Stack Island, which he noted as a bad spot; but finding that it lay some miles ahead, we called it a day.

After we had been asleep an hour or more, a terrific jolt yanked us halfway out of our bunks. (Astern, the fat cook Tiny suffered worse indignities: she was hurled clear of her berth, and her suitcases in the rack above cascaded one by one upon her head, until her screams roused the soundest sleepers.) Hastily looking out, we saw the big tow

disintegrating — a dozen barges snapping their cables with a noise like gunshot, lurching and grinding as they pulled away from each other, then scattering downstream like lost sheep. Our towboat had run hard aground on a sand bar, while the momentum of the shallow-draft barges hurtled them on. Two deck hands, having failed in a running spurt to reach the towboat, stood forlornly on the gunnel of a runaway barge careening down the river. And one of the barges, we remembered, was carrying, wedged by thin wood-blocks on deck, the new automobile for which we had waited years. Snatching bathrobes we climbed up to the pilothouse. "Here's your Stack Island," said our mentor glumly. And I reflected that Clemens's notes after ninety years were not yet obsolete.

For nearly an hour the boat's twin-screw propellers churned the sandy bottom, while decks trembled and sashes rattled. At last our boat writhed free of the boiling mud and began the job of chasing down her tow. The moon had set, and a sky full of large summer stars shut down upon the seething water, through which an occasional black log blundered. In the beams of our two searchlights a thousand insects were spinning madly. Finally these fingers of light groped for and caught an object on the shore, canted at an angle of forty-five degrees. It was the first of our fugitive barges. We weighed the probability that we would be pedestrians for several years more.

But at length we sighted the rest of the tow, and saw our car still perched precariously atop its barge, and also observed (with more humanitarian interest) the missing deck hands there beside it. After about two hours' hard work by captain and crew — while my wife and I, the alleged two engineers, lent only our mute sympathy — the tow was triumphantly reassembled, lashed and chained together, and the controls passed to our red-haired co-pilot Pinkie, choleric veteran of forty years on the Mississippi. Off we started. And then, with an awesome crack of doom, the M.V. *Casablanca* ran smack upon another mud flat while her tow ripped apart and dispersed helter-skelter down the river. Recalling what my hero had said about the old-time river pilot's language — edged with brimstone and illuminated by the lightning of blasphemy — I involuntarily braced myself.

"Oh, shoot," said Pinkie, and spat copiously.

Later I learned that he had had a directive from the management when we sailed, reminding him that a lady was aboard; that explained much. But for the moment it seemed as if another grand old tradition of the river had fallen upon the sere and yellow.

The chase of barges took in all six hours, but sunrise saw us swinging once more into the brown tide of the Mississippi, rolling toward the Gulf, as we two sat complacently in our rocking chairs on deck.



Chemist, writer, and university president, JAMES BRYANT CONANT of Harvard is faced, as is every college administrator, with the problems imposed by the armed truce in which we live. The effect of inflation on American education can be measured in teachers' salaries and in overcrowded classrooms. The effect of Universal Military Training can be forecast and it need not inevitably lead, as some say, to war. The clear and affirmative statement which follows has been drawn from President Conant's forthcoming book, Education in a Divided World, which is to be published this autumn by the Harvard University Press.

EDUCATION IN AN ARMED TRUCE

by JAMES BRYANT CONANT

1

AMERICA'S fitness to survive in a divided world is related to the power inherent in our traditions. Our future national strength depends to a large measure on wise and intensive cultivation of those elements in our democratic culture which are peculiarly our own. At the same time the responsibilities of world leadership require us to extend the boundaries of our interest and our sympathy as never before. We must formulate the goals of our free society in terms consistent with our past, yet force our imagination to leap two oceans. There is no room for chauvinism, complacency, or isolationism in our thinking. We can be both intensely American and yet international-minded, both loyal to the unique manifestations of democracy in the United States and staunch friends of free societies of all types wherever they may be found.

We are living in a world divided by the impact of a social philosophy the equivalent of a powerful new religion. There can be no doubt that a doctrine derived from Marx and Engels as interpreted by Lenin motivates the action of many courageous, ruthless, quick-witted fanatics. The essence of the belief of the Soviet group is that they are at war with all peoples who do not accept their gospel and that they are bound to win. Unlike the Mohammedan-Christian conflict of earlier times, force of arms is not the primary instrument on which they must rely. Their prophets have said otherwise. Military force is only one aspect of their policy. The totalitarian socialistic regime (the dictatorship of the proletariat), when once established by revolution, will be subject to counterattacks by the armies of the bourgeois democracies according to the orthodox prediction of the prophets; therefore, there must be military power for "defense." At

what point this type of defensive thinking when coupled with offensive political action becomes true aggression is one of the metaphysical riddles troubling liberals in the democracies today.

The riddle is troublesome because it reflects the paradoxical nature of the clash between the Soviet philosophy and the progressive democratic doctrines of this country. Both use the same words so often and mean such different things! The average American, who has his own very definite ideas about democracy, equality, and freedom, finds the words and attitudes of the leaders of Russia and the satellite nations confusing. The rulers do not pretend that they are in control of a communistic state and yet they preach communism; they talk sincerely about freedom, and yet run a ruthless police state; they endeavor to obtain control of a country by using the machinery of "bourgeois democracy," and then once in control throw it overboard and still talk about democracy with a straight face!

In reports to the *New Statesman and Nation* from Prague in March, 1948, R. H. Crossman (by no means a reactionary observer) wrote as follows:—

But the fact remains that three weeks ago Czechoslovakia was a country with civil rights and Parliamentary institutions. Today that is no longer true. When I said this to a young Communist he replied, "But it's such a small price to pay for a great leap forward to socialism!" . . . An hour and a half with Mr. Slausky, the Secretary of the party, showed me clearly enough that he felt for Parliament what Cromwell felt when he said: "Remove this bauble." "How can you call this democratic?" I asked him. "Of course it's democratic. We have succeeded in purging all the parties of all their reactionaries." "And the newspapers?" "But there, too, we were constitutional. The Cabinet had unanimously passed a law that only recognized political parties

should publish newspapers. We are keeping strictly to that rule. But now all the parties are reliable."

This sounds not only like nonsense but the worst kind of hypocrisy. Perhaps it is both, but the evidence points strongly in the other direction. I am convinced that when we are dealing with the followers of the Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin line we are dealing with dangerously sincere people. Not that lying to the enemy is a forbidden weapon among them — quite the contrary; but when they speak publicly they are speaking for home consumption.

To deal with a group of persons intelligently one must have some idea of their presuppositions. Whether you take an optimistic or a pessimistic view of the chances of turning the present armed truce into a peaceful competition of ideologies, the fact remains that we must deal in one way or another with the fanatic yet capable followers of Lenin. Therefore, it behooves us to understand them. We must study the Soviet philosophy, we must examine and debate the creed of the Communist Party as it has been formulated and defended both here and in foreign lands. Indeed, I would go so far as to say that this is the number one educational need of the present moment. This must clearly involve adult education even more than school and college if an effect is to be produced within the next few years. If I were dealing with adult education, I would place as the twin objectives of discussion groups, radio programs, and evening classes an understanding of the American democratic society and its historic goals, and a dissection of the Soviet philosophy and an exposure of its methods. One of the chief problems of the armed truce is to achieve the second of these objectives in the face of the tendency of certain leaders to confuse a tightening of military security with a witch hunt.

2

ONE special set of problems in education which arises from the armed truce, then, concerns the study of Soviet philosophy. Both the urgency and the difficulties arise from the nature of the international situation. A second set of educational problems can be defined as the study of other countries and world problems. Old-fashioned isolationism is dead. The children now being educated, as citizens of the United States, will be involved in one way or another with what is going on in distant countries in a way our grandfathers could never have imagined. A knowledge of world geography, of European history, and of the culture of the Far East must be provided to some degree at every level of the educational process. One of the very difficult problems is how some knowledge of these complicated matters, involving a mass of detailed facts, can be supplied as part of a general education.

Those educators who since 1941 have been urging

a greater emphasis on the study of foreign nations because of a belief in the possibility of world government in the near future have been wrong, according to my view, in their premise but right in their pedagogic conclusions. Even in a peacefully divided world, the next generation of Americans must be more intelligent about other nations and far less parochial in their outlook than their predecessors. If one hopes, as I do, that within fifty years the deep cleavage now dividing the world will become only a relatively shallow ditch, the children now in school may live to see the day when the present arguments for world government may not be entirely fantastic. Therefore, as so often happens in educational controversies, all hands may agree on what should be done in practice. The debate which in this instance boils down to a sharp disagreement about the time involved may well be suspended.

Finally, we come to the impact of the military situation on our educational system. Indeed, I might say on our whole life. At the moment this is a matter of bitter controversy. Those who criticize the present foreign policy of the United States most severely do so in connection with plans for building up the military potential. Before discussing the relation of these plans to education I should like to give my own appraisal of the necessity for rearmament of this country in terms of an armed truce which may be very long.

I am convinced there is little or no analogy between the Nazi menace and the Soviet challenge. The former, to my view, had to be met by force of arms because it was an immediate military threat. The latter is an ideological and political thrust supported by military means; the Russian armies hidden behind the Iron Curtain are defensive troops to support political gains by the advanced fifth column within another nation; they are not to be used as the spearhead of the forward movement.

I recognize I am being very dogmatic about a highly debatable subject. Not only will many experts on foreign affairs disagree with this diagnosis, but history may prove me wrong within the next few months. However, I am bold enough to predict that, unlike Hitler, Russia will not take aggressive military action by invading a nation without an invitation from a *de facto* government. I make this prediction in July, 1948, in spite of the gravity of the situation in Berlin. Recurring periods of extreme tension would seem inevitable consequences of an armed truce. If Great Britain, France, and the United States are firm in their determination to hold positions recognized as just by world opinion, I doubt that the Soviets will force the issue. The proper pattern for preventing the outbreak of another global war would seem to involve readiness to answer coercion by the use of force coupled with willingness to negotiate at any time on matters of broad policy.

In an armed truce when there is an atmosphere

of deep suspicion and each side imagines that the other is about to break the truce, the chances of hostilities are great. The less the commanders in the two camps know of the disposition of the other's troops — their numbers and their equipment — the more the suspicion multiplies, the greater becomes the alarm that the truce will be broken without notice by a perfidious attack. If this simplified analogy of two armies face to face in former days of war be applicable to the present divided world, one basic fact stands out. As long as we in the United States are in complete ignorance of what is going on in Russia and its satellite nations, there can be no hope of relaxing the tensions of an armed truce. Security being what it is in a free country, the Russians must have an extremely poor intelligence service if they are not quite well informed as to our military capacity. We might as well be frank about it to ourselves and to them. We must assume the worst from the military point of view about their readiness and their war plans, and we must balance them quite openly with a counterplan.

Of course, frank talk about such delicate matters will not be possible in the United States until after the Presidential election. Once this four-year oratorical hazard inherent in our system has been passed, one may hope for an open discussion of the military answer to Russia's hidden military strength based on her vast manpower and her ready access by land to many of the sixteen nations in whose future we have so deep an interest.

I do not propose here to state what the balance should be except in very general terms. Since Russia might on short notice overrun Europe with her armies (which as far as we know may be mobilized to spring forward at any moment), our balanced strength should be equally ready to strike. How? With what? From where? These are some of the questions to which we need frank answers. And I cannot believe that this talk would in the least disquiet the dwellers in the Kremlin since they assume (according to Marx) that we will strike them in due course. When these questions have been answered in terms of a total diplomatic-military plan for action to offset the Russian challenge, then debate on preparedness will take a more realistic turn. Until that time comes, as the debates in Congress have made clear, we shall be lucky if we can keep our Army up to the strength required to carry out our acknowledged commitments.

3

MANY educators have opposed the program of Universal Military Training as outlined in the Compton Report. I have not been among this group. On the contrary, I have supported the report because it represents a most careful investigation of an extremely difficult subject by a group of distinguished laymen. The Compton Report, furthermore, gives none of

the misleading arguments for military training (its alleged educational value, for example). The question may be raised whether the investigation is not now somewhat out of date. The nature of the armed truce is now more apparent than in 1947. Keeping the Army up to strength seems the first requisite. If and when an over-all strategic plan for the armed truce can be prepared and explained to the American people, another approach to the manpower problem must be attempted. The present stopgap draft law merely postpones a real decision.

There are arguments in favor of enrolling every boy (no exemptions except for extreme physical disability) when he reaches eighteen or graduates from high school in a national militia for a period of ten years. The local unit of the National Guard would be the medium for his subsequent training, which could be accomplished in three or four summer camps of two or three months each, and evening drill throughout the year. Those who volunteered for immediate duty in the Army, Navy, or Air Force would be exempt from this ten-year service and, in addition, could be given special educational and vocational privileges and ample separation pay. Some such system of training, often referred to as the Swiss method, has been advocated for years by a few college presidents, but has received no support from the military men.

College people, of course, favor such a proposal because it would not wreck an educational year as does even six months of training. Another advantage of some such scheme would be that in case of war a national service act for everyone under twenty-eight would automatically be in operation. The disposal of manpower under emergency conditions should be, of course, in the hands of a civilian commission with complete authority.

Whatever may be the ultimate long-range decision of Congress about the military training of young men, the schools and colleges can and will adjust to it, without question. That there will be a cost in educational terms must be readily admitted. What adjustments in calendars and schedules will be required no one can now say. Whatever plan is finally adopted for recruiting the Army and training the youth, one may hope provision will be made for a review of the entire situation every four years by a civilian commission. This was recommended in the Compton Report and seems essential.

Those who oppose rearmament on general principles will, of course, be as much against a huge Air Force as UMT, or as much against a Swiss plan as the Compton Report. They will be appalled by the idea that we must balance military might across the chasm that divides the world, and ask, how can this lead to anything but war? This is a fair question and should be answered by those who talk in terms of an armed truce. We who believe that war is far from being the inevitable outcome of a strengthening of our military power would argue somewhat as

follows: once the sixteen nations under the ERP have shown that they can prosper, their answer to the ideological and political thrust from across the Iron Curtain will be clear. Once our military answer to a possible military thrust from the same direction is definite and convincing, a real stalemate will be evident to all clear-minded men even in Soviet Russia. In January, 1948, we must remember, it may well have looked in the Kremlin that history was not only on their side for the long pull but also for the immediate future.

Even a fanatic believer in the Marx-Engels-Lenin doctrine may be able to see a roadblock when he meets it. If the sixteen nations prosper, the ideological thrust will be neutralized; if our balancing the Russian armies is evident, the stage is set for a frank talk with the Soviet rulers. And what should be the terms? A gradual demobilization on both sides; and the first step in this program must be a raising of the Iron Curtain. I recognize this is a great price for the Soviet rulers to pay, but we must play for the chance that they will eventually be willing to accede. From gradual and open demobilization one may hope in time to come to a gradual disarmament — beginning, I hope, with the atomic bomb. But, as things now stand, that is a prospect at least five years away.

4

ONE of the major problems of an armed truce which directly affect education is the cost of living. We must contrive to keep our armament program from starting another inflationary spiral.

Anyone who directs his attention to educational institutions sees the damage which increased prices cause throughout our schools and colleges. The effect on endowment income in terms of what it can buy is only one aspect of the matter. The havoc comes from the inability of any nonprofit institution, whether financed by taxes, gifts, or endowment, to adjust rapidly its sources of income to a fast-changing level of prices. The inadequacy of the pay of teachers in our elementary and secondary schools was turned from a serious problem into a national calamity by the inflation of 1945 to 1948. The remedial measures taken in some states as the result of an aroused public opinion have hardly compensated for increased cost of living. A relatively stable price situation seems a requisite for wise planning of our education, however it may be financed.

Let us assume that prices can be stabilized approximately at the 1948 figure; if rises there must be, they will represent not more than a small per cent per annum. Then we can talk in terms of the amount of public moneys which should be spent for education and consider the tax basis for raising this amount. As I see it, the relative priorities for educational reforms *which cost the taxpayers money*

would be somewhat as follows: (1) bring all elementary and secondary schools up to a minimum standard in terms of adequacy of plant, teachers, salaries, and ratio of teachers to students; (2) improve the guidance program in almost every school and support the research on which these programs should be based; (3) increase the number of two-year local colleges in almost every state; (4) institute a scholarship program for talented youth destined for a few professions; (5) improve still further the elementary and secondary schools and bring them all far above the minimum.

To accomplish the first objective requires increased taxation: either a rise of the local rate or, in many states, the reallocation of state funds. I venture to point out that there are states where, since the state aid is small and the supervision slight, very poor schools exist locally, though the average may be high. In some states Federal aid is the only answer. Of course, the order of priorities I have given has relevance only in so far as the needs are competing for the same source of funds, as is the case with money voted by the Congress. Those concerned with colleges and universities may well question my assignment of so high a place to the high-school and the pre-high-school needs. They might be inclined to put first an expanded scholarship program. College teachers are keenly aware of the talent lost because of economic barriers to college, but they are apt to overlook the loss in earlier years. They fail to realize how much good material never comes within sight of a university because of the inadequacies of many of the high schools throughout the United States.

The improvement of the guidance system may or may not require increased funds. Certainly a better integration of guidance with the teaching should be possible in many schools without much increase in cost. This question of guidance is central to the whole philosophy of a democratic school system which endeavors to make society more fluid.

Guidance is the keystone of the art of public education. At every stage of the educational process, the capabilities of each student should be assessed. Wise counseling should assist the pupil in taking the next step in the educational journey. Eventually each youth should find a satisfying employment corresponding to his or her ambitions and abilities. In many high schools the potential professional talent suffers the most from the present inadequacies. I wish some organization identified in the public mind with concern for *all* American youth would take some dramatic action to demonstrate a vigorous interest in the gifted boy or girl. This would serve as an encouragement to all teachers. The schools would be stimulated in a direction which in some quarters has been rather spurned as being undemocratic and old-fashioned. A National Commission for the Identification of Talented Youth has been suggested by one group of educa-

tors; the sponsoring of this by public school administrators and teachers would be the sort of thing I have in mind.

We cannot hold our own against the challenge of the Soviet philosophy unless there is a determined improvement in our system of public education. Our free tax-supported schools are the sinews of our democracy; we must make them strong. They are an agency for minimizing social and economic differentiation; through them we may hope to keep American society fluid and move each decade nearer our historic goal of equality of opportunity. The American system represents a unique type of universal education. It is unique, first, because there is little or no differentiation among pupils in terms of subsequent vocations until after the high school years are past; second, because a very high percentage of our youth finishes high school and a considerable percentage goes on for still further education.

The point of view that I should wish to see pervade our public schools would be that of a tough-minded idealist. On the one side it leans heavily on a certain type of social science; on the other it is almost fanatically humanitarian, tolerant, and individualistic. Without being chauvinistic it gains strength by its close connection with the indigenous stream of American idealism. Indeed, there must be enough of this American idealism in the mixture to insure against any disguised Toryism's gaining the upper hand; there ought to be enough tough-minded critical quality also to prevent the planning of Utopias from usurping all the energies of our educators.

To laymen who pass judgment on the public schools one cannot repeat too often: education is a social process; our schools and colleges neither operate in empty space nor serve identical communities. Before you judge a school, analyze the families from which it draws its students and the opportunities presented to its graduates. What may be a satisfactory curriculum for one group of pupils may be highly unsuitable for another. And the difference is often due not to discrepancies in the intellectual capacities of the students but to the social situation in which the boys and girls are placed. This in turn depends on the nature of the local community of which the pupils and their parents are a part. All of which requires speaking frankly of the stratified nature of our society. To my mind, there is no inconsistency in combining a dissection of the social order with an advocacy of policies which are aimed at making the stratification less visible and the entire situation far more fluid. Indeed, one may question whether one can be an effective advocate of change without being at the same time an unshrinking analyst of the present. If this be true as a general rule, education is hardly the field for the exception. To be well founded an

educational philosophy must be part and parcel of a comprehensive social philosophy. This is particularly true in the United States at the present moment. Our free schools both reflect the ideals of the nation and ensure the perpetuation of our special forms of democratic living. In short, this is why public education and its future are so closely related to our survival in this grim world.

A protracted struggle between two cultural patterns seems to be ahead. But democracy as we understand the word in the United States will, I believe, win almost every round — provided, of course, that we have sufficient intelligence and foresight to recognize the true nature of the struggle. If we are willing to continue to strengthen the sixteen nations whose needs the Congress has recognized under ECA and fortify the democratic forces within those nations, the omens will be favorable for peace in the coming years. Provided further that we neither talk nor act as though we were merely seeking allies for an inevitable war. This nation, having arrived at a stage in history where the words "foreign policy" take on new meaning, must traverse that narrow knife-edge which divides supineness from belligerency. Patience and yet more patience, strength and wisdom to handle strength, a belief in the importance of the historic goals of our unique society, intelligence and courage to cope with problems of terrifying complexity — all these we shall need in abundant measure.

Nothing is static in a period like the present. The United States fifty years from now will be unlike the present or the past. Our aim is surely to preserve the maximum degree of individual freedom and at the same time widen the opportunities for a rich and fruitful life. The influence of our example, if we succeed, will be felt throughout the world for centuries to come. Nothing short of the complete destruction of Western civilization can obliterate the effects of a demonstration by the United States in the next ten years that a "government by the people and for the people" is possible even in a distraught era following two global wars. Nothing short of the worst of the fears of the alarmists can vitiate the endeavors of the citizens of this country to bring our society nearer to our historic goals.

No one can deny that the people of the United States in the last century and a half have made a lasting and highly significant contribution to the development of civilization. But the task is nowhere near completion. We have been the medium for carrying forward certain ideals and aspirations. To a considerable degree it is in our hands today to decide how much greater shall be our contribution. Who could ask for more than to be given an opportunity to live in a time when such possibilities lie ahead? This is the answer to the current philosophies of defeatism and despair.

I Personally

The son of a Siberian peasant, MIKHAIL KORIAKOV won his spurs as a Soviet journalist and literary critic while still in his thirties. But because of barbed-wire political entanglements which sometimes impede a writer in the Soviet Union, in 1939 he sought to bury himself as a "brain worker" on the Tolstoy Estate at Yasnaya Polyana. During the war Mr. Koriakov took part in the defense of Moscow, and later was made military correspondent to the General Staff, an assignment which took him to every sector of the 2000-mile Russian front. After the war he escaped from the Soviet Embassy in Paris and came to Brazil, where he wrote I'll Never Go Back.

TOLSTOY IN SOVIET HANDS

by MIKHAIL KORIAKOV

1

THE director of the Tolstoy Museum, Alexei Ivanovich Korzinkov, had a face like the udder of a cow — it was a delicate pink, in fat creases, covered with a golden down. Although he was not an army man, he wore cavalry breeches and a cloth blouse, held tightly in place by a yellow belt. Before the war, this was the (unwritten) regulation uniform for responsible regional representatives of the Party. A. I. Korzinkov had been the president of a fishery coöperative in Archangel. But, as the poet has said, "The Central Committee plays with men." By some twist or movement of the Party line he landed in Tula and found himself the director of the Museum-Estate of Leo Tolstoy.

He felt quite at home there. The Museum as an intellectual institution did not exist at all for him: it was a State Farm. To the manor house belonged the former Tolstoy lands, the forests (the famous Crown Woods, the Abramtsevski birch grove), seventeen acres of orchards (35,000 apple trees), and finally the hothouses and vegetable gardens. All this was a subsidiary enterprise attached to the manor house. But it was "subsidiary" in form only: actually it was the main enterprise, completely absorbing all the energies not only of the Museum staff but also of the entire village attached to the manor house.

The entire harvest, without any deductions whatsoever, was subject to requisition by the government. The peasants who worked in the various subsidiary departments were considered government employees, as were the members of the Museum staff. In the absolute and literal sense of the word they were State peasants, State serfs as in the pre-emancipation days. The Soviet government is a serf-owning landlord. The master's concern for the welfare of his serfs finds its expression in the fact that a State peasant receives a pound of bread for a day's work.

That bread is brought all the way from Tula, ten miles away, or occasionally it comes from the bakery attached to a metallurgical plant at Kosaya Gora. The usual procedure was this: The working day is over. In the twilight a half-starved crowd in tattered clothing gathers in front of the Volkonski mansion built by Tolstoy's grandfather. They are waiting for their bread. The man who brings it is an hour or two late. Perhaps his horse has gone lame, or there was some delay at the bakery. Finally, along the dam between the ponds a covered sledge comes into view. A slight steam rises from it. The crowd breaks into an animal-like roar: —

"Bre-e-ad! Hot, hot, and good, that's what. . . ."

"Come out here, you timekeeper, Pashka Gorshkov! Where are you? Come on out! Give us our bread like a good fellow. . . ."

"Here it comes! Here it comes!"

Pashka, the timekeeper, appears on the stoop of the house, holding the list of those who have worked today for the Museum's farm. The heads of brigades have already informed him who did and who did not fulfill the required amount of work. The latter receive a proportionately smaller ration: instead of 500 grams they get 400, or perhaps only 300. But a State peasant is glad to get even that: a collective farm peasant gets nothing at all. The chunk of fresh bread is carefully stowed in the bosom and carried home, to the village.

The brain laborers receive their ration first. If they choose they may even draw it two to four days in advance. For them, in accordance with a special list, the bakery sends a certain amount of white or so-called "70 per cent" bread. The definition of "brain worker" is elastic. It covers not only the "scientific" secretary himself and those directly under him, but also various members of the administrative staff: accountants, timekeepers, heads of brigades, the Party organizer, the labor union

organizer, and finally the Commandant (shades of Tolstoy the pacifist!) of the Museum. All this top crust enjoys a variety of privileges: the warehouse superintendent gives them vegetables, and the dairy woman provides them with milk. In the autumn of 1939 the "scientific" group each received a hundred-weight of winter apples. The price was fantastically low — 50 kopecks a kilo (by standard exchange rates, roughly 10 cents for 2.2 pounds). This dispensation was bestowed, however, only on the true brain workers, five or six people, and not on the administrative staff as a whole. Korzinkov described it as being "for the purpose of encouraging outstanding work on the displays in the literary section of the Museum."

Another privilege enjoyed by the "scientific" staff derived from the fact that the main administration of Tolstoy Museums was situated in Moscow. This meant that the "scientific" staff were sometimes sent to the capital on business errands. By keeping on good terms with Korzinkov and Nelyubov, the "scientific" secretary, one might manage a trip as often as once a month. From Moscow one could bring back butter, macaroni, vermicelli, and sacks of various kinds of meal.

But there were difficulties about this. In the railroad station at Tula, beside the ticket window, there was always an NKVD officer flanked by two or three policemen. He always checked on one's right to go to Moscow: the order issued by the Museum, leave of absence, ticket, passport. This NKVD man occasionally found that the reason for the mission to Moscow was "insufficient" or, and this was frequently the case, "improperly stated." It all depended on his mood. "Let the Tolstoy Museum in Moscow send a personal call for you," he would say. "Otherwise I cannot see that your trip to Moscow is really necessary." With a smile he would then ease the crestfallen man with a mission to Moscow away from the ticket office.

The Yasnaya Polyana peasants hated the Museum administrative staff. The top crust in turn wasted no affection on the "scientific" people, because of their privileged position. My food was modest enough, my supplies were meager indeed, yet my meal stuck in my throat when I remembered that right next door, in the village, bread was being measured to the last crumb, the people growing bloated, the children dying of starvation.

2

THE directive sent down from Moscow, and covering several pages of fine rice paper, was definitely disturbing. It carried the imprint of the People's Commissariat for Education of the Russian Socialist Soviet Republic and was on the subject of "the extension of socialist competition among museums." The directive stated that the progress of this competition had been unsatisfactory: "the checkup

which has been carried out shows that social duties are not being performed and that several museums do not even have social contracts." A separate slip attached to the directive contained a special order to the Museum-Estate of L. N. Tolstoy to enter into socialist competition with the Museum-Estate of I. S. Turgenev.

Nelyubov locked himself up in his office for two days and did not speak to anyone: he spent his time mulling over the directive, underlining this with a red, that with a blue, and a third with a green pencil, and constructing various hypotheses — *a, b, c*. On the third day he chucked his alphabet full of tentative plans into the scrapbasket. "What kind of socialist duties are we supposed to assume?" said he. "I'll tell you what we'll do, Koriakov. We'll call everyone in and perhaps someone will come up with a bright idea."

Suddenly the former Tolstoy kitchen, seat of the "scientific" section, was invaded by an unexpected caller who burst in on us in a cloud of snow and vapor.

"I am Yermakov," he said, "the director of the Turgenev Museum. How in the name of Marx do I engage in socialist competition with the Tolstoy Museum!"

He was in the same quandary as we, so he had galloped over from Orel to consult with us. As he thawed himself out he told us about an incident that had deeply disturbed him: the theft of a Turgenev manuscript.

It was no laughing matter to him although we roared as he told us about it. It was really a gorgeous story, involving V. D. Bonch-Bruyevich, onetime secretary to Lenin, administrator of the Sovnarkom and, before the war, director of the State Museum of Literature. This museum was his child. He must be given fair credit for accomplishing an enormous piece of work in a short space of time. Inside of a few years he had published forty volumes of "Literary Heritage." He had gathered together a mass of material related to the history of Russian literature and social thinking. But he had acquired it by tactics which were frankly those of a bandit. Bonch's agents snooped around everywhere. It was sufficient for them to pick up a scent leading them to some old lady said to be in possession of her great-grandmother's album, and she might as well kiss it good-bye: Bonch's boys would arrive on the scene, ask "to take a look at it," then carry it off as an object of "necessity to the State." The hapless Yermakov had also fallen a victim to what he called this "superbandit."

"One day, out of a clear sky, Bonch dropped down on me in Orel," his story ran. "I received him as I would a welcome guest — Vladimir Davidovich, what an honor! I ordered dinner served. Meanwhile we sat and chatted. 'Well, what treasures do you have to boast about here?' asked Bonch. 'Show me your prize pieces. I suppose you have trunks full

of Turgenev manuscripts?' 'What trunks are you talking about?' I replied. 'All I have is one manuscript which I guard like a holy relic.' 'Well, then, show me that.' So I went and fetched it. But then as bad luck would have it I was forced to leave the room because my digestion was upset. When I came back not a soul was there. 'Vladimir Davidovich! Vladimir Davidovich!' But there was no trace to be found of him or the manuscript. Five days later I had a letter from him. 'Forgive me,' it ran. 'While you were absent my car came for me and it was quite impossible for me to wait for you any longer.' As for the manuscript — blank silence. So I wrote him, how about the manuscript? 'Don't worry,' he replied, 'I'll send it to you.'

Yermakov waited for a year and a half. He made trips to Moscow, but to no avail. Bonch offered him a typewritten copy in exchange for the original manuscript. The director of the Turgenev Museum raised a row. The director of the Moscow Museum attempted to soothe his feelings by saying, "Well, if you don't want a typewritten copy, I'll give you a photostat — what difference can it make to you?" Yermakov filed a suit. It had come up for trial not long before and Bonch-Bruyevich had turned him, the plaintiff, into a defendant: —

"You listen to me, Citizen Yermakov. Russian literature will be grateful to me for having saved that manuscript of Turgenev. Why, you were on the point of using it for toilet paper!"

The scene in the court was farcical. The judge held his head in both hands, the courtroom rocked with laughter.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself, Vladimir Davidovich!" shouted Yermakov. "I just let you hold the manuscript in your hands while I went to the toilet!"

But plead as he might, they only laughed at him and he was finally left helpless. Although important literary experts appeared on Yermakov's behalf, the judge did not hand down any decision. Perhaps the reason was that he feared to make a ruling against such an important man as the former secretary to Lenin. The case was adjourned: the manuscript remained in Bonch's possession.

Although our loud laughter at first offended our colleague from Orel, he finally smiled and said, with a sigh, "What a bandit he is! Oh, what a bandit!" But the story cut deep with another person present: Sergei Ivanovich Shchegolov, with whom I had made friends there on the Estate.

"You'll see, they'll come and loot our museum, too," he said with a woebegone expression when he heard about the theft of the Turgenev manuscript. "Look what happened to Tolstoy's saddle. Where is it now? It's three years since they carried it off to Moscow. And the portrait. If only Comrade Korzinkov would at least persuade them to do something about the portrait."

This was perfectly true. On order from the Com-

missariat of Education the Khramskoy portrait had been taken out of the big reception room and sent to Moscow. It was supposed to be gone some six weeks or two months, the length of the Khramskoy exhibition in Moscow. But afterwards the whole exhibit had been sent to various provincial cities, to Siberia, to Central Asia, and so forth. The time had lengthened to more than a year. Meanwhile the original portrait by Khramskoy had been replaced by a none too successful copy made long ago by Tolstoy's daughter Tatiana.

But Korzinkov's interest was not at all centered in the "mementos": his principal concern was the State Farm — apple crops, eggs, meat packing, feathers, down, bristles, and so forth. The director's head was in enough of a whirl already. Agitators had been sent down by the regional Communist Party committee to carry out a propaganda program for instituting a Stakhanovite movement in the grain fields, orchards, and dairies. So Korzinkov suggested to Yermakov that the two museum-estates could stage a competition under the slogan: "Let's get in a Stakhanovite harvest." But the proposal did not strike a spark because the Turgenev Museum did not have a large enough estate with which to compete.

3

MY own life in Yasnaya Polyana, which seemed so attractive in the beginning, was ruined by the new director — a real museum specimen of a fool who could talk about nothing but the "mirror of the Revolution." The core of our "scientific" work was on exhibits of the literary museum. So what does the Red Banner director do but insist, first of all, on our rearranging the first of the five rooms in accordance with the leitmotiv, "Lenin and Tolstoy"! At any hour of the day or night, on any or all occasions, the director was to be found either holding in his hands or carrying in his pocket a little pamphlet of collected articles by Lenin on Tolstoy. Once he brought a stack of the pamphlets down from Moscow. Then he called all the employees of the Museum together, not just the brain workers, but the accountants, the timekeepers, the cleaning women, and presented each of them with a pamphlet, personally inscribed.

"In order to justify your job as a co-worker in the Tolstoy Museum," he insisted, "you must make it a rule to read this book every day. This is how I execute the task I set myself: every morning for two hours, at least, I read this immortal masterpiece of Comrade Lenin."

The immortal masterpiece was 36 pages long.

This is one of the disastrous difficulties which beset the path of scholars of literature in the Soviet Union: they meet with articles by Lenin on the subject of Tolstoy, or Herzen, or somebody else. These are not articles, they are manacles, heavy

chains which weigh down the research man. The question of Tolstoy, from the official point of view, was conclusively settled by Lenin's 36-page pamphlet. Researchers are left with nothing to do except to cull — from 100 volumes of Tolstoy's work — such quotations as will illustrate and confirm the 36 pages of Lenin. In line with this we were directed to reorganize the exhibits in the literary museum.

In the first room, now given over to "Lenin on Tolstoy," we set up a four-foot clay bust of Lenin, and laid out copies of Lenin's pamphlet and photostats of Lenin's manuscripts. Nor was that all: each one of the remaining rooms was devoted to an "idea," expressed as usual in a quotation from Lenin and exhibited in a prominent place on the wall. The life and creative works of Tolstoy were presented, not on their own, but as adjusted to fit the Lenin quotations.

Besides this we were handed another problem to solve: to reflect "A Short Course in the History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik)" in the exhibits of the literary museum. But how? Naturally by the use of quotations. For example: "In the sixties of the last century, Tolstoy was writing *War and Peace*, and here, comrades, we have a quotation from the Stalin textbook on the very subject of the 1860's" — or the 70's or 80's, or 1905.

A regional conference of intellectual workers was called in Tula for the purpose of studying "A Short Course." I was sent as delegate from Yasnaya Polyana. The speakers included teachers, physicians, engineers. One elderly doctor, a roly-poly, clean, prosperous-looking man, whose bald spot glinted as he addressed us from the platform, declared: "'A Short Course' is a torch for our lives. Great Stalin did not give it to us just to read once and then put it on the shelf. No, comrades, we must be guided by it in all our daily undertakings. As for me I can say that 'A Short Course' is of daily help to me in my medical practice."

Applause filled the hall. I also clapped of course. Then I was called on to speak a few words about "A Short Course," arrangement of exhibits, the mirror of the Revolution, and kindred topics. All the blighting nostalgia, of which I had thought to rid myself in Yasnaya Polyana, overwhelmed me once more. Alas, there was no "technical" refuge in literature. I dare say there was none even in the truly technical fields. It was impossible to desert from the ideological front. There was no place to desert to. Not even to farthest Siberia, to that kingdom of death — for there, too, as a matter of course, they carry on the same "Party work among the masses," "political education work." The only refuge lay in falsehood.

4

ON SUNDAYS the museum was always crowded and the room where I gave my talk was open at both

ends. One Sunday some teachers, who had been attending a regional conference at Tula, came to Yasnaya Polyana on an excursion. The literary museum was housed in the Kuzminski wing, the two-story stone building which used to be the schoolhouse. I do not know what demon prompted me to prepare, not the usual stereotyped lecture, but one with the emphasis on Tolstoy's pedagogical activities. Of course I must have known what a deviation that was from the regulation "theses and concepts."

"There is one question, comrade, which I should like to ask," said an elderly schoolmarm in a plain black bonnet. "Do Tolstoy's pedagogical ideas have any meaning for our times?"

I reflected for a moment and then I answered exactly what I believed: —

"Undoubtedly. What is Tolstoy's fundamental idea, as expressed not only in his pedagogical activities but in his whole life and writings? Surely it is that everything significant, affirmative, and worth while that a man accomplishes is the result of a process which takes place in the first instance inside him, something deeply hidden, often not conscious, the source of which is beyond his knowing. It is as though some inner power acts in man. Tolstoy defined it in the words of the Bible: The Kingdom of God is within you. Conversely, what man does without that inner compulsion, under the pressure of external force, such as, let us say, violence, all that is transitory, unsound, void of significance. It is not without calculated reasons, comrades" — I switched back to a clear track — "that the Party and Comrade Stalin have put the training of the masses ahead of everything else. You teachers are the conductors of Party influence . . ." But the fat was really in the fire!

To one side, between the drifting tourists and my listeners, stood an important personage: T. Chmutov, secretary of the Tula Regional Committee of the Party. He was the second secretary — as luck would have it the one in charge of propaganda. I knew him by sight, from pictures and from Party conferences, but this time I had not noticed him. As soon as my talk was over he came up and introduced himself with calculated courtesy. He offered me a cigarette, asked me to show him the famous century-old alley of trees, and Tolstoy's grave. As we walked he plied me with questions: Had I been in Yasnaya Polyana long? Where had I come from? Where had I been educated? What was my previous work? Finally something stirred his memory: "Of course, of course, it was quite recently that I read an article of yours in *Literary Criticism*." As he said good-bye he was again excessively polite, saying with a smile, "It has been so pleasant meeting you."

"What did you think of my talk?" I burst out.

"Very competent. Full of material. Of course, it would do no harm to emphasize that although we use conviction, from now on we shall not refrain

from using compulsion. Our Party's strength lies in these two things combined. But on the whole, it is a good lecture. It's obvious that you know your subject."

Chmutov's praise caused me vague forebodings. I knew too much of the ways of Soviet dignitaries. In most cases they try not to stir up animosity directed against them personally on the part of the great non-Party masses. On the contrary they make every effort — personally — to produce a pleasant, worth-while impression. Meanwhile, behind the scenes . . .

Two days later a commission descended on Yasnaya Polyana. It was headed by a woman; her name has slipped from my memory, but I remember that she was the chief of the Tula Regional Division of Public Education. This commission studied our exhibits in the literary museum, checked the materials used by the Museum guides, talked with Korzinkov and Nelyubov behind closed doors. At a general meeting of the whole staff a resolution was passed to ring all the changes on "apolitical attitudes." Further, the commission noted that the "scientific personnel was not being trained in political activity and the study of the 'Short Course' was being left to individual initiative. As a result the talks for tourists lacked political incisiveness and the scientific co-workers, instead of making use of the clear-cut Marxist-Leninist formulations,

were juggling with Biblical terminology." I had a distinct sense that the wind was blowing from the quarter of Chmutov. Nelyubov came in for a dressing down; the commission pointed out to him his lack of political supervision. As I discovered later, my name originally was featured in the resolution, in connection with the "Biblical terminology." But, as I was leaving Yasnaya Polyana in a week's time for Moscow in any case, they decided to leave it out.

In the course of the two years I spent at Yasnaya Polyana it goes without saying that I studied a great deal of Tolstoy. There was an interesting thing about this: if, on the one hand, Tolstoy did much to help me understand the people, the elemental temper of the Russians, it was also true that they in turn helped me to understand Tolstoy. When I say the "people," I do not mean merely the peasants of Yasnaya Polyana, but also the thousands of tourists who came to the Museum from all corners of Russia. They were all working people who had given up their annual vacations to "go to Tolstoy." (Vacation tickets give you the right to travel by railroad in any direction, even to Moscow. The only places not allowed are cities in the frontier zones.) The questions of "Tolstoy and the People" and "Tolstoy and Russia" were answered for me in concrete form before my eyes. And the answer was *not* Lenin's.



THREE HOUSES

by MARGARET BEAUFORT

THEY are gone, the three houses:
Clover Hill, Palmyra, The Fountain;
Ninety years they stood in this valley
And now they are ashes and rubble.

These, the three houses known least
And loved most: square frames of brick,
Plaster, and field stone, and built for a century —

Three houses set on the rim of a valley
Facing the quick stream of this river,
With their backs to the pine hills.

These, the guardians of the fields,
Homes of those who tilled and loved this land
And built their lives upon it.

Now the soil has grown thin
And the blood stream has dwindled;
Long were the owners land poor —
How poor their land is without them.

Sam's house, of yellow plaster,
Heard always the shouts of children.
At Sam's house, boys learned to sow and reap,
To read and figure, and to lay
A straight true wall. There through the years
Sam's corn grew green and high.

At Frank's house on Clover Hill
Were brick walls and white steps in the sycamores
And height and time to look across at his brothers
And down on the valley.

There water flowed through his springhouse
And fireflies lit the land through summer evening.
The girls at Frank's house learned to card and spin:
Children and women there for generations.

To Harper's vine-clad house across the Yadkin
Down from Watauga over the Blue Ridge, every year
Rode the tall hunters, hill farmers on horseback,
Whistling through the thick frost of November;
Talking of father and son, stones laid for The Fountain.

Now no tale and no jest recollected
Of Harper the huntsman;
No echo now of eager hounds
Or men's rich laughter
Welling from The Fountain;
No smoke curls from his blackened chimney;
Now in his grove no habitation:
Old Harper lies alone yet not lonely,
For rifle in his hand the master rests.

No song is heard above the harvest,
For Frank is asleep in his sycamores
And Sam's cornfield goes to sedge grass above him.
No shot rings sharp across their pasture;
Harper's fox has bold run of their pines.
Three brothers are dust of their valley —

Clover Hill, Palmyra, The Fountain?
Bones and ashlar no kin will remember:
From the horn in the ivy, no call.



An Atlantic Story



An Irish poet, author, and surgeon, OLIVER ST. JOHN GOGARTY is almost as much at home in America as in Ireland. A gay, dynamic figure who pilots his own plane and loves archery, Dr. Gogarty was a fellow student with James Joyce and, so legend has it, the model for Buck Mulligan in Ulysses. He first unlatched our affections with his witty semi-autobiography, As I Was Going Down Sackville Street, which appeared in 1937.

ONCE ONLY

by OLIVER ST. JOHN GOGARTY

MAYBE once a year, maybe not once in two or three years, the dream or vision comes to me of a small boy who was myself lying in the heather beside a mountain rivulet gazing down at a trout balanced about an inch or two above the sandy bottom of a little pool.

Of late the vision has become more frequent, so frequent in fact that I decided to visit Roundwood and try to find again that mountain pool which cannot have been far from the house where I stayed, for a little tiny boy may not wander far without being missed and chided on his return; and chided I was not.

To Roundwood then I resolved to go prepared for the disappointment and the disillusion that are in store for all who seek to recapture the wonder and enthusiasm of their childhood.

Half a hundred years ago! Where will Beda Murphy be and the maids who served that little inn?

From the railway station at Bray the drive was long, for there were no taxis owing to the restrictions on motor fuel. A landau or victoria, one of those carriages that stretch between their pairs of wheels like an inverted Cupid's bow, was surely the kind of vehicle that took me to Roundwood in the days gone by. It seemed appropriate now. That is why I hired it. I liked the looks of the driver, a rubicund fellow in his early forties.

The drive was tedious, for the horse had to be walked up the many hills that lead to the Rocky Valley. We stopped at Pluck's. Pluck may not own it now because taverns change owners even as the Fort of Rathangan. The driver threw a rug across his horse and followed me into the bar parlor. There

was nobody about. A round mahogany table, a horsehair sofa, and a few sporting prints gave a noncommittal greeting to all and sundry. In the yard outside, a hen could be heard clucking. Sunlight slanted across the narrow yard. After a long wait, the driver obligingly went in search of an attendant. A girl appeared and disappeared. We were more or less intruders. It seemed that we had broken the conventions by coming in by a side door instead of by the door over which the porcelain letters of J. Pluck encouraged the fainthearted. We apologized for being there at all. This confused the barmaid or the housemaid or whatever she was into action.

"What d'yez want?" she inquired.

The hen made a commotion as the maid returned with the drinks.

"Don't go away," I said, "we'll want the same again."

We left with a feeling that the management had conferred a favor by suffering our presence at all.

The Rocky Valley was before us, the road escarped by granite boulders upthrust between broken acres of golden gorse. A few summer cottages hid among the rocks to the right under the shelter of a hill. After a slow climb the high ground on the right fell away and revealed a wide valley with a hint of a stream.

The driver, who failed to draw me into conversation, not for the want of a vocabulary but for fear that he might make the unforgivable mistake of taking a native for an American, began to thaw under the delayed action of the depth charges we had laid down at Pluck's. He leveled his whip, and

pointing to a large mansion of light brown stone crowned by a dome of green bronze hardly visible in the trees, said: "That's Powerscourt over there."

"Powerscourt?"

"Yes; where the Battle of Agincourt was fought."

"It seems to me that I have heard something about movie men and a battle they staged in Wicklow. So that's the place?"

"Begob, sir, you should have seen it. It took months. It was the longest battle I ever heard tell of. There was horses and spears and tents and knights in armor. My son was working in it. You never seen the like."

"Who ran it?" I asked, and foolishly stopped the tide. He had to consider what to him was quite an irrelevant detail. After much thought he said in a voice that had lost its enthusiasm, "I think it was a man by the name of Rank that was behind it."

"Soldiers rank on rank," I said, and was sorry for myself. It does nobody good to gulp down a drink.

The driver resumed the saga. "They hired the Waterfall and pitched tents and bought up every old nag in the country and paid the boys well to dress up in armor and go charging at one another hell for leather with a long pole in their hands."

"A pole?"

"Well, a spear. There's plenty of them about for keepsakes since. They have a round rise near one end and a point at the other. Regular spears they are, like the lancers used to have. They spent a lot of money while they were at it. It was thirsty work. The Powerscourt Arms was full every night and The Royal and every pub in Enniskerry. But they had to be up and mounted and ready to charge at cock crow. And they kept the crowds out. That's why I'm thinking that they took Powerscourt because it has a wall round it to keep out the crowds."

"But what did Lord Powerscourt say to all this?"

"Sure wasn't it him that rented the demesne to them? It was Her Ladyship that did any objecting there was."

"Why should she object when His Lordship didn't?"

"There I leave you. Women is queer. They say that when she came across an arm or a leg or a nose that had been lopped off the day before, she would pick it up on her spiked stick and say, 'What shall I do with this beastly thing?'"

I had to comment aloud as a chorus to his tale. "It must have been shocking, right enough, to find a nose or an elbow in the demesne?"

"Sure. They were the limbs that was lost the day before and never missed."

"The casualties must have been heavy?" I suggested.

"Faith you're right; but they were mostly French. The English won every day and the people didn't like it. They began to blame the management."

"What could they expect?" I asked. "Was it not

an English company that was running Agincourt in Powerscourt?"

He thought that out and reluctantly agreed that what they were staging had the backing of history.

"Aye; that's the way it happened in the old days. The French got the hell of a licking. It must be true, for a nephew of mine who worked in the battle for a month on the French side — and didn't like it — got such a belting that he turned on the Englishman, a fellow by the name of Houlihan, and sez he to him, 'See here, Houlihan, get this into your head and under your helmet and don't forget it: if ye larrup me on the last night as ye have been doing up to this, bejabs, I'll reverse history.' It's history all right. That's how I know."

I felt the need of silence to think this out.

2

THE Great Sugar Loaf was behind us now. The old Gaelic inhabitants called that and the Lesser Sugar Loaf the Silver Spears. In that lies history too, and more than history. The Anglo-Saxons, lovers of creature comforts, thought of food. The more unsettled Gaels thought of feuds and forays. Wicklow was a battlefield long before Mr. Rank with his chain of flour mills staged Agincourt beneath the Sugar Loaf.

The driver was talking to his horse. I accepted the cue and inquired after the horse's welfare. This started more history; but this time it was personal and contemporary.

"You think that the country is prosperous but God forgive you! Do you know that if it wasn't for the Old Age Pension and the Battle of Agincourt the mare and I wouldn't have a bit to eat?"

It is evidently my destiny to be astonished. I had never seen the country looking more prosperous. The people appeared to be cheerful and well fed; misery was nowhere to be seen. But now I am told that it is all as deceptive as a movie. And what am I to think of an Old Age Pension for a man in the prime of life? I was dumfounded. At last I said, "Do you tell me that you are in receipt of an Old Age Pension?"

"Aye; and only for that I might as well retire."

"Surely there is an Inspector to interview you before the Government hands out Old Age Pensions?"

"Av course there is; and two of them. But it was not me they seen at all but an auld alibi out of the mountains." He jerked his whip over his left shoulder and indicated the O'Byrne country with its mountain fastnesses and deep glens.

Again I was silenced. I wanted to picture to myself that "auld alibi out of the mountains," that old mountainy man, suddenly finding himself of growing importance as the value of the Old Age Pensions dawned on the tribesmen of hill and glen. Just as he has decided to settle down and to "hus-

band out Life's taper at the close" he is thrust forward to represent his constituency, the younger generation, who are helpless when it comes to being suddenly matured. I longed to cast eyes on that auld alibi. Maybe I shall meet him before my excursion ends. I have hopes, for I remember Mahaffy's dictum: "In Ireland the Inevitable never happens, the Unexpected always."

After two hours, the road passed by an artificial lake in fields to the left. Soon it afforded a glimpse of a natural lake and then passed between two or three houses on either side. A house on the right was my destination.

The driver took my bag into the hall. He was enjoying such a welcome that I wondered if there would be any left for me. Obviously he was well known to the owners. He was a clansman who never drove past the house with a fare who might be a good customer. But now it was the driver who had to listen to local histories. A grave and ancient man was the speaker. His daughter was woman of the house. She appeared to be a widow, for to no husband did she refer. This by itself would be a poor proof of widowhood in a court of law; but in a home it had more import.

After talking to me for a quarter of an hour she turned to the old man, and to his surprise announced that I knew as much about the place as herself. I had been here as a boy. This took the conversation far into the night. It was late when I went along the corridor to my room. In the morning I would begin to explore.

3

THROUGH a thin screen of pines the Vartry Lake gleamed gray. That was over the road; but as far as I remembered, it was on the hither side the little stream flowed down. I went through the garden at the back of the house. A few apple trees stood with arms akimbo covered with silver moss. Through the fence I passed and walked to the right through the fields. There was no sign of a brook. That was strange: mortal things pass away but a running brook flows on. If I go back and out onto the road and then turn into the fields, or, better still, go on until I come to a bridge, I may find it. There was no bridge. Perhaps the stream was too small to need a bridge which would only cause a rise in the road. I left the road and made a wide semicircle high up in the fields but no brook was there. Then I thought of the heather. Maybe it was from a picnic I had stumbled upon the brook.

The heather began far away, so far away I went. The ground rose brokenly into what in Scotland they call "braes." A high bank, too high to see what was above it, rose before me. What is that? Distinctly I heard the sound of water falling hidden from the eye. I should have known that in such broken ground a rivulet would be hidden. I reached

the bank. To my delight I saw the little pool with a wall of rock rising upright beyond it covered with brown wet moss. A tenuous and broken column of water blew sideways now and then as gusts caught it, but the greater part of it fell into the pool. Eagerly I took in every detail: heather, ferns, moss, a leafy branch spreading half across to hide the pool from above. Would I look for the trout and risk a disappointment, or be satisfied with what I had found?

It was no wonder that I had failed to find it at once. The pool lay low in the heather under a wall of rock; ferns and branches of a willow took root out of sight. It was just a little basin in a mountain stream. How clear it was! Had it not been for the ripple where the water fell into it, I could not have been sure where its surface ended and the air began. It was as crystal clear as the eyes of a wondering child.

I tried to see it as I had seen it for the first time. The branches I did not remember; but everything else was there: the gushet from the rock, the tinkle behind me as the overflow hid again in the heather and the granite dust that formed its sandy floor. There was one difference though: I could now reach down an arm through the fluent crystal and touch the sand that had seemed long ago so out of reach.

It was comforting, this sense of accomplishing something by my discovery. I realized that it was not all a dream and that the persistent vision had its origin in reality. I followed with my eye the course of the stream to where it went under the road. Just as I thought: it had not a bridge to itself. It passed through a square tunnel of cement. I marked the spot; it was not more than a few furlongs from the inn. Hedges started again, interrupted here and there by walls. I could not miss the place even in the dark.

Childhood is indefatigable but not so I. How long I lay beside the pool I do not know. Half an hour would take me home when I wished to go. I did not seek a fish in the little pool. Instead I crossed it by the help of the baskage beside the tiny waterfall. I worked my way along the narrow channel of the stream. I passed between two boulders like the pillars of a door on level ground where the stream was absorbed among mosses and ferns. The ground grew firm and dry. I turned around the last bush of golden gorse that bloomed by the way under a solitary boulder of granite, and a strange sight met my eyes.

I had come upon a town not a hundred yards away: houses, streets, carriages and horses, men, women, and children, and the cheerful hum of life. A church rose beside its tall steeple that held a clock with gilt hands upon a black dial. The church was the only building out of proportion. Another picture in process of being shot, I guessed. But there were no guards nor fences to turn me back. I walked along the first street I came to and looked about me.

Shops and offices and private houses lined the way. Smoke rose from chimneys, for the weather though bright can be cold in Ireland in summer. Motor cars and motor bicycles were absent. It was as if you were in Bermuda or some town of old Japan. A period picture evidently. And yet there was no apparent sign that buildings had been thrown up temporarily. They looked far more solid and substantial than anything I had seen in the studios of the West Coast. Whatever company is financing this must intend the set to be permanent.

Down the street came a two-seated trap or carriage with the horses in tandem. That was a sight I had not seen for years. The man who drove it wore a tall silk hat. Though young he sported side whiskers. Beside him sat a "tiger" or little groom. He raised his whip in salute as he passed. I turned to see if there were anyone behind me for whom it was intended, for I could not take it that he meant the salute for me. There was no one near. Strange!

Two ladies approached. Between them walked a little boy. He wore a large collar outside his coat and he walked demurely with his toes turned out. When he saw me he seized the hand of one of the ladies. Mother and governess, whoever they were, wore clothes that seemed strange to me. Their skirts swept the pathway and their sleeves were puffed out like legs of mutton and rose over the shoulders in two soft peaks. Their shoes were buttoned higher than the ankle like those of the little boy. They carried umbrellas with long handles. They walked leisurely, talking the while, without hurry or even purpose.

I turned into a street at right angles to the one by which I had entered. Here crowds were lining the way. A hum of excitement ran through them. A procession of some kind was about to pass. I took a place three steps up in front of one of the houses to get a better view. Presently a large coach came on suspended by great leather straps. Four horses drew it, driven by a fat and bewigged coachman with golden epaulets. Beside him sat a footman similarly dressed. Within the coach, which had large windows of glass, sat an alderman with a lady beside him. On the seat in front of them on a dark red velvet cushion lay a huge silver mace. The crowds cheered and waved handkerchiefs. "The Lord Mayor!" they cried. He bowed in acknowledgment of the cheers. Behind his coach, in gay red vests and helmets of shining brass, came the city's Fire Brigade. They drove by, riding in or clinging to fire engines, hose carriers, and a long ladder shining with fresh brown varnish. The Fire Chief drove behind them in a smart two-wheeler. He raised his hand when he too was met by cheers. After these came what appeared to be the various guilds of the town with large banners pictured with their emblems. Behind the banners walked men in civilian clothes, some of whom wore gold sashes across their breasts. They marked time like soldiers when the procession

slowed at a turn. They marched gravely without looking at the cheering crowd.

Suddenly a bucket of water fell on my head and shoulders and on those who were standing beside me. We looked up. A small boy was held dangling by one leg from a top window of the house on the steps of which we were standing. A man who held him leaned out of the window and waved his free hand. We took this gesture for a sign that he was punishing the boy for his mischievous act. Any-way it had the effect of appeasing the crowd.

4

AFTER a while the procession moved past and I was left standing on the steps of the house alone. I took out a handkerchief and began to dry my hat and coat, when the door opened behind me and a lady who looked like one of those whom I had met out walking appeared and said gently, "Won't you come in?" She spoke with quiet dignity, yet I knew that she was disturbed.

I entered a large hall which had a brass rail just inside the door. A deer horn receptacle for umbrellas was beside it. At the back of the hall rose a tall grandfather clock. Chairs stood against the walls, and over the fireplace was a large picture, framed in cane, of a paddle steamer gay with bunting passing a crowded pier with a lighthouse at one end.

"We are extremely sorry for what has happened. My son, I am afraid, is very bold. Rest assured that he will be corrected."

I made light of the incident; "accident" I called it; and turned to go.

"You cannot go," the lady said. "You must have your clothes dried thoroughly; and you must stay to lunch. My husband will be in shortly and will be glad to see you. He will not be pleased when he hears of Alec's escapade. He spoils the child." As she spoke a key turned in the lock and a small man in his early middle age entered the hall. He wore whiskers like the rest of the cast. He looked at me in no unfriendly way and then looked inquiringly at his wife.

"Alec poured a jug of water on the people who were standing on the steps of the hall door. This gentleman got the most of it. I have asked him to lunch while his coat is being dried."

He extended his hand. "If you have not noticed my name on the door — and I don't suppose you did — it is Purefoy. I am a doctor. This is my wife. I hope that you will accept our invitation."

"It is extremely kind of you," I said, "but I cannot think of trespassing on your hospitality. After all, the accident was due to a boyish prank. I am wet already through wading along a mountain stream!" I glanced at my shoes. He followed my gaze but apparently saw nothing odd about my shoes.

"Nevertheless," he said, "lunch is ready." He looked at his watch as if to confirm his statement. "We will not let you go. Thackeray will attend to your coat. Oh, Thackeray," (as the butler appeared) "while this gentleman's coat is being dried I will give him one of mine." He led me upstairs and turning to his wife said, "We won't be long: better tell Miss Orr."

We entered a large room made smaller by a double bed and a mahogany wardrobe with three doors. He opened it and selected a dark coat for me. Try as I did, I could not get into it. I thought it odd that so much fuss was being made over me. At last I made a driving coat of his cover my chest. Thus attired I went to lunch.

We entered another large room furnished with heavy mahogany chairs, sideboard, and dumb-waiters. Silver shone on the sideboard. On a mantelpiece of dark gray marble in front of a mirror that reached the ceiling stood a clock of gilt bronze based on black marble between two bronze urns. The room seemed strangely familiar. Mrs. Purefoy came forward with another lady who was obviously Miss Orr. I had seen them before. It was they whom I met out walking when I entered the town. Old and recently familiar things were becoming confused in my brain. If these people are rehearsing, I thought, it must be the most unremitting rehearsal to which any cast has been subjected. They keep it up off the set. But even though they were friendly a gentle reserve which I sensed made me forbear to ask directly what they were playing. I preferred to fall in, so to speak, with the play.

Miss Orr was bantered on the misconduct of her charge. She turned the raillery gracefully. "All's well that ends well, we must admit." Shyly she glanced at me.

"Yes; Alec has brought us pleasant company," Mrs. Purefoy conceded.

"Through no intention of his own," the doctor commented.

"I would have sought the baptism had I known to what happiness it would lead me," I said in an endeavor to return the polite words of Miss Orr.

Claret in colored glasses was served with the lunch. Neither of the ladies drank wine.

The talk was of the opera and of the fullness of the house. They were going to hear Madame Patti sing.

I asked Miss Orr if she liked grand opera. She said that she did but that she preferred chamber music. She seemed to be embarrassed to talk about the opera before the doctor and his wife. The thought struck me: her employers were not including her in their party.

The doctor rose and apologized for leaving before the end of lunch. "But you will understand," he said. That was the only inkling, if it were intended, that I got of his being wanted on the set. I supposed that they were glad to have me to test themselves

out on, as it were. I dismissed the thought as being uncomplimentary even to myself; yet when we went upstairs to the drawing room the thought recurred. They were rehearsing a Victorian "At Home." I was the foil, the visitor.

The ladies seated themselves on satin-covered chairs. I stood behind a chair the back of which was covered with mother-of-pearl inlay, until I was invited to be seated. I felt very conscious of my incongruous costume and wet shoes which the ladies were too polite to notice.

"I am so sorry that my husband had to go out. I never know when he may be called. You know the way it is?"

I nodded understandingly.

"You are very photogenic," I ventured. I might have known beforehand that neither of them would depart from character. They pretended not to know what I meant. They looked puzzled.

"You photograph well," I said.

They looked at one another. Then Mrs. Purefoy said, "Evangeline, would you be good enough to bring the photographs?"

Miss Orr left the room.

"It is impossible to get Alec to keep still. Mr. Lawrence has to fix his head with an iron bracket before he takes his photographs. Miss Orr will show you what I mean."

Miss Orr returned and placed a set of photographs wrapped in tissue paper in my hands. She stood behind the chair and leaned over my shoulder as I unwrapped them. I saw a small boy with a lace collar and a large sailor hat standing on a rustic bridge. In his left hand he held a fishing net the handle of which obviously served to steady him on the bridge. His full broad face was turned to the beholder. Long golden ringlets fell down to his shoulders. The face seemed strangely familiar.

So that's the brat who inundated me, I said to myself. I hoped that the look on my face might pass for a look of interest. I turned to a second photograph. The subject was the same.

"Miss Lacey is here," Thackeray announced; but no one was ushered in. That, being interpreted, meant that Miss Lacey was not a visitor but a sewing maid. This proved to be right. Mrs. Purefoy excused herself, saying that she had to try on her dress for the opera. I was about to leave when she added: "I will leave you alone for a little while. You cannot go until your coat is dry."

5

MISS ORR was still standing behind me. I turned round when Mrs. Purefoy had gone through the door which Thackeray held open. I looked Miss Orr in the eyes.

"When do you go on?" I asked, summoning my courage. The result of the question was surprising. Miss Orr went over and sat on one of the

seats in the middle of the room. She bent her head into her hands. Her shoulders shook convulsively.

"Take me out of this!" she moaned. "Oh, take me away!"

At first I wondered what book they were screening and what was her part. Something that had to do with an elopement evidently. But why all this waste of energy when there was no one to see her?

Tears fell through her fingers. Sobs shook her. Good heavens, can she be in earnest? I asked myself.

"Why do you want to get away?" I asked.

She looked up with eyes like drenched violets and said: "From that awful man."

"The doctor?"

She nodded.

"But you have Mrs. Purefoy to protect you."

"She's worse."

I saw the position in a flash: a pandering wife.

"Take me away," she cried again.

"But how? How? When can you leave? When do you intend to go?"

"Any time. Oh, any time. Tonight when they are at the opera." She rose from her seat and fell on my neck. If there were ever embarrassing positions I had found one.

Two heavy plaits contained her hair. I noticed that it curled in golden ringlets behind her ears and yet it had looked light brown, which goes to show how much my mind must have been in abeyance that I should notice in a crisis such a trivial thing.

"Promise to take me away. Oh, promise me."

I was about to ask, "What will I do with you?" when I remembered that only a fellow like George Moore would ask a question like that. The code they taught me lays it down that you do not argue with a lady who invites you to elope.

"Where can we meet?" was all I said.

"By the church at eight. It will be dark by then. There will be a service tonight. No one will notice me." I confess that code or no code, it did seem strange the way she recovered her wits. Mine were still dispersed; while I was trying to gather them, "Promise," she said.

I could feel how round her arms were in the black silk sleeves of her governess's dress, her badge of

servitude. All at once the pathos of her position overwhelmed me. I promised.

She released me and walked slowly to a window. She was just in time, for Thackeray appeared with, "Your coat is ready, sir."

When I returned to the drawing room, the ladies were preparing tea. Very politely I refused an invitation to join them. Where was it I had heard that on your first visit to lunch in a strange house, it is not done to remain on to tea? The clock in the steeple chimed. I looked at my watch. It marked four o'clock. They had never heard of summer time I realized.

"You must come again," Mrs. Purefoy said.

"I should love to." As I said it, I wondered if I would be welcomed again.

It was dusk when I set out from the inn to keep my promise. I gave myself ample time, for I intended to enter the town from the same approach rather than take the risk of failing to find it. I walked rapidly to reach the stream while the light lasted. Once I had that for a guide, I could take my time until darkness gathered. This time I took the road and soon left it to follow the course of the brook. I would wait by the pool until the service was over and it was time to meet Evangeline. What was I letting myself in for? Was she quite sane? Maybe the doctor and his wife were sheltering in their home one who was subject to hallucinations? But hallucinations or none, I had given my word to be at the church at eight. The light was fading now.

I turned round the rock and stared. There was no town. I walked forward to where a street had been. There was neither street nor house; there was only gorse and heather.

And then a strange thing happened which I accepted because it had all the plausibility of a dream. I seemed to be the small boy; and the water he threw at me out of a jug wet me again. I was both victim and aggressor. I was getting drenched though he seemed, or I seemed, to have but one jugful. I sat up and moved my position. The wind had changed and the waterfall was falling over me. I arose, and as I did so, overhead in the middle air, I heard a deep bell ring.



Atlantic Portrait

The most eminent Shakespearean of his day, George Lyman Kittredge ruled the English Department as he ruled his classes at Harvard, with an iron hand and cold blue eyes which could spark when the occasion arose. Never a Ph.D. himself, he did more to train and temper the steel of Ph.D.'s than any other educator in the East. His fire, his challenge, and his encouragement will not soon be forgotten. We have called on ROLLO WALTER BROWN, one of his students, for this picture of "Kitty" in action.

"KITTY" OF HARVARD

by ROLLO WALTER BROWN

1

THERE could be no doubt about the matter: George Lyman Kittredge consisted of more than one man. Just how many men were required to constitute him, nobody seemed able to say. But that he was not less than two, everybody who knew him was ready to admit.

The first of these two — the one he was most widely thought of as being — was the "Kitty" of Harvard Hall. Undergraduates with vivid imaginations made sketches of the old building on the point of blowing up, with zigzag electric fragments of Shakespeare — "Kitty" spelled it "Shakespeare" — shooting from windows and roof, whenever "Kitty" held forth. To many of them for a lifetime the total meaning of Harvard Hall was "Kitty."

The sight of him as he came to the ten o'clock class was in itself something that had to be recognized as dramatic. In the pleasant autumn or spring, men stood high on the steps or out on the turf in front and watched in the direction of Christ Church to see who could catch the first glimpse of him.

"There he comes!" somebody called, and then everybody who was in a position to see watched him as he hurried breezily along — a graceful tallish man in very light gray suit and gray fedora hat, with a full square beard at least as white as his suit, who moved with energy, and smoked passionately at a big cigar. Students used to say that he smoked an entire cigar while he walked the short distance along the iron fence of the old burying-ground and across the street to Johnston Gate. But as he came through the gate he tossed the remnant of his cigar into the shrubbery with a bit of a flourish, and the students still outside hurried in and scrambled up the long stairway in order to be in their places — as he liked — before he himself entered. If any of them were still on the stairway when he came in at the outer door like a gust, they gave way and he pushed up past them, and into

the good-sized room and down the aisle to the front, threw his hat on the table in the corner, mounted the two steps to the platform, looked about with a commanding eye, and there was sudden silence and unrestrained expectancy.

"Any questions?" he asked — meaning questions about matters considered at the last meeting of the course. After five minutes of these questions he was ready to begin.

The play under consideration was *Macbeth* — let us say; and he was ready to take up Act III. Always his method was a careful examination of every line, every significant word, with a running commentary on problems of drama and theatre. At the end of the year we were supposed to know five plays — sometimes a sixth — so thoroughly that in the final examination we could spot any line or piece of line that he quoted (usually about sixty), tell what came just before and after, who said the words and to whom, and be able to comment on whatever was significant in the passage. Then there were somewhat more than six hundred lines of memory passages. And there were books of assigned reading. Even the least wise in the course filled margins of their copies of the text, and pages of gummed interleaving paper, with notes against an oncoming evil day.

"Now," he said, after he had read and commented upon Banquo's opening speech, and had reminded us once more that *Macbeth* is a swift-moving play, "there are three very important questions on this next page. They are neatly imbedded, yet for the purposes of the play, they stand out in red ink. What are they?" — and he glanced up and down the class list — "Mr. Howard."

Mr. Howard — it might have been Cabot or Flynn or Jones — did not seem to be present.

"Mr. Howard?" "Kitty," repeated, with the slightest trace of irritation in his voice.

When there was still no response he suddenly exploded. "The college office had two ghost men

on my list for two or three weeks before I could get them off! Is this Mr. Howard another?"

There was no response.

"Is there anybody in this room who knows anything about this spook Mr. Howard?"

There was not a murmur, seemingly not even a breath, among the hundred and more students.

He slapped the book down on his desk so sharply that some of the men in the front row jumped. "By heavens, this is not to be endured! I asked a perfectly decent question, and I am going to have an answer if I have to take a poll of the entire class!"

A man back in the middle of the room hesitantly lifted a hand. "I am Mr. Howard."

"Then why didn't you answer?"

"I was not prepared."

"Kitty" flew into so vast a rage that even the top of his head was ruddy. "Well, couldn't you at least have identified yourself? Stand up, Mr. Howard" — and he made a movement as if to step down off the platform — "so that this class can see who you are. And" — after Mr. Howard had very promptly stood up — "you are to come over to Sever 3 at twelve o'clock and expostulate with me — in the Elizabethan sense."

He picked up the book and in a twinkling went on, quite as if nothing unusual had happened, to point out that the three questions down the page were the ones that Macbeth asked Banquo: —

"Ride you this afternoon?"

"Is't far you ride?"

"Goes Fleance with you?"

And then in an engaging smoothness of temper and in flowing brilliance he commented on one passage after another, made compact explanation of linguistic details, reminded us that it was not the words that had become obsolete that made the most trouble for us in understanding Shakespeare, but the words that had not become obsolete, and otherwise rounded out the whole of the scene until we felt as if we must be knowing the play somewhat as the audience knew it when it was originally produced.

He came to a very brief stage direction. "Note that Shakespeare is usually brief. If Mr. George Bernard Shaw had been writing that stage direction, he would have filled a page, at least."

There was a flutter of mirthfulness. It was the style then to laugh at any mention of this new playwright, as though of course he could not be much.

"Incidentally," he said, as he paced the platform, "there are other differences between William Shakespeare and Mr. Shaw."

There was greater mirthfulness still; and time flowed on harmoniously.

Some professor of economics had great charts and maps on rollers all over the front of the room, and there were two or three long gracefully sloping

pointers at hand. "Kitty" picked up one of these and used it as a staff-like cane as he paced back and forth and commented. He was magnificent. He was an Anglo-Saxon king speaking to his people.

Once in his march as he socked the royal staff down, it came in two where there was a knot in the wood, and he made a somewhat unkingly lurch. A few students snickered very cautiously.

He glowered upon them. "You have a fine sense of humor!" Then without taking his eyes off the humbled faces, he drew his arm back as if he were hurling a javelin, and drove the long remnant of the pointer into the corner of the room. "Now laugh!" he dared them.

It was always a double experience. "Kitty" might suddenly step out of the Elizabethan world and pounce upon some man and scare him until he was unable to define the diaphragm — it once happened — and require him to come to the next meeting "prepared to discuss the diaphragm" as a preliminary to an hour of *King Lear*. No man might feel altogether sure that he would escape.

Once "Kitty" read with such a poetic impression of reality that a man who was later to be widely known as a magazine editor sat lost in rapturous enjoyment. Suddenly "Kitty" stopped. "Now what is the commanding word in that passage" — and he picked up the printed class list and let his eye run down over the names — "Mr. . . . Smith?" "Mr. Smith" had been so rapturously lost that he did not even know where the passage was. A neighbor whispered the number of the line to him and he answered correctly, "Why — 'God.'" "Don't you 'Why — God' me!" "Kitty" stormed back at him; and then gave him such a dressing down for using the unnecessary word as he had never known, so that he always had that to carry along with his memory of the perfect reading.

On another occasion "Kitty" picked up the class list, started on the *R*'s, became interested in one man's brilliant answers to his rapid-fire cross-examination, and left the rest of the *R*'s dangling in suspense throughout the three remaining months of the year.

Men knew that he was a miracle man, and thought it worth accepting all hazards in order to possess some part of his basic richness of life. They completed the year, grumbled a little about the mark he gave them — there were few *A*'s — and very probably came back the next year to study the alternating group of plays. In that case they had the thorough knowledge of ten or eleven plays, instead of five or six; they knew eleven or twelve hundred lines of good passages by heart; they had vast information about drama and theatre and sources and language and Elizabethan life; and they had interesting fragments of such a store of miscellaneous knowledge and wisdom as they had not supposed until last year could be the possession of any one human being.

2

THAT was one of the men in the total George Lyman Kittredge. That part of him could not be brushed aside as if it were not an essential part. It was. But it was the more external part. Many of the men in the course in Shakespeare knew this well enough. They saw that it was their irresponsibility, or laziness, or grotesque ignorance, that touched him off into his tantrums. His disgust and amazement and scorn were release for a sensitive mind — usually in need of sleep — whose everyday high level made it impossible for him not to suffer in the presence of unlimited imperfections. And his graduate students who had never taken the course in Shakespeare found it difficult to believe the wild stories about him. For to them he was a courteous gentleman who begged them to smoke some of his good cigars, and know that they were potential scholars about to be admitted to the most honorable company of men on earth.

His courtesy did not prevent him from exercising the dominant mind. When a student explained somewhat fearfully that he had noticed in the dictionary that a certain word was accented on the second syllable, “Kitty” said, as he put the word down on the back of an envelope, “That’s wrong; I’ll see that that is changed.” Through generations of Shakespeare students — and his place on the board of editors of one dictionary — he caused a shift in preference to the pronunciation of “Elizabethan” with an accented long *e* in the middle. But he could never establish “Shakspeare” as a preferred spelling.

Sometimes, too, his overpositiveness came back upon him in ironic ways. He insisted on withholding a degree from a man for insufficient acquaintance with the drama who later became a national figure in playwriting. He once prevented a man from receiving honors in English with whom ten years later he marched down the aisle at a university commencement where both received honorary degrees — the young author and the white-haired professor.

Men who were chiefly concerned with the literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries very justly felt that he placed heavy emphasis on the early centuries. But he insisted that the early centuries were of the utmost importance, and that they were full of interest. The age of Chaucer, he contended, was closer to us than the age of Pope. Always there were students who had looked upon Chaucer as some vague accident back there on the edge of the pure night of the Dark Ages, and for a time they sat skeptical, although they assumed that Chaucer was somebody about whom they should know a little.

But when they listened to Professor Kittredge — or “Mr. Kittredge” — they saw the age of Chaucer coming to such vividness of view that they had to

admit that it outshone the nearer centuries in brightness. He invited them to see that “the spirit of radicalism was abroad in the land. To describe as an era of dumb submissiveness the age of Wyclif, and John Huss, and the Great Schism, of the Jacquerie in France and Tyler and Ball in England, is to read both literature and history with one’s eyes shut. . . . It was a scrambling and unquiet time when nobody was at rest but the dead. In a word, it was a good age to live in, and so Chaucer found it.”

And so they found it — and the heroic world of Beowulf, and the world of English and Scottish popular ballads, and all the other less familiar worlds to which he introduced them. Something of his own vividness had gone into his original exploring, and now something of it went into the revelation of what he had discovered.

But whatever the area in which he for the moment was occupied, he was engaged in perhaps the most difficult — and most desperately needed — of all educational endeavors in the United States; that is, in having pure scholarship recognized as a source of life for all men. Scholarship is the final high honesty. Men worked with Professor Kittredge — always the least bit awesomely — and came to feel how great was the disgrace of a human mind that let itself be content with anything short of the completest disinterested understanding.

From his fortunate position he all the while was sending out great numbers of men to important college and university posts. They were such men as John M. Manly, of the University of Chicago, one of his earliest students; Walter Morris Hart, of the University of California; John Samuel Kenyon, of Hiram College; Karl Young, of Yale; Carleton Brown, chiefly of Bryn Mawr; John A. Lomax, of the field of American ballads and folk songs; John Livingston Lowes, who came back from Washington University to teach in the Yard for the rest of his active life — and write *The Road to Xanadu*.

At times the objection made its way back to Cambridge that some of his disciples were not important men of this kind, but only “little Kittredges.” And sometimes the reports were true. If men are basically small they are sure to adopt the accessible mannerisms of anyone whose superior qualities are out of reach. But Professor Kittredge’s distinguished former students constituted a great company. In Texas, in Iowa, in Pennsylvania, in California, men accustomed to the axe-to-grind sort of thinking, in what they called the practical world, looked upon these honest scholars as an ultimate standard of excellence to be applied in matters of every perplexing sort.

And in Professor Kittredge it was more than honesty; it was high faith in honesty. His former students often traveled a thousand miles — sometimes farther — to have his counsel when they were in doubt. A young professor in a Midwestern col-

lege had confided in an older man in one of the chief universities of America about an original project that he had in mind for the next year, and then found that the older man had immediately hurried off a young colleague to work at the idea and be first in the field. Sleepless, the young professor went to consult someone who was wise.

Professor Kittredge sat erect and smoked at a great fragrant cigar and listened in silence until the man was through. Then he said without a moment's hesitation: "Don't let the matter trouble you for one minute. And don't modify your plans — not by as much as a hair. Scurvy business of that kind doesn't work out — in the end. It is not the other man's idea; he is working at it because his chief suggested it to him. He will make little of it. The idea is yours, from the inside of you, and consequently you will be aware of all sorts of possibilities in it that the other man, whoever he is, will never see." And when it turned out precisely so, Professor Kittredge said with a trace of a smile round his eyes and down into his white beard, "We have to count on its being like that."

3

HE GAVE his complete self to the world of the teacher. He required nothing else. In it he had labor and recreation and profound joy — without end. For forty-eight years (1888–1936) he taught at Harvard. He never took a sabbatical year of leave, nor a half-year. He did not like to have breaks in his work. He did not like to go off to other universities to lecture in term-time. He made a number of trips to Europe, but with one exception he made them in the summer vacation period. England was his great fascination east of the Atlantic. When he was made an honorary fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, he was delighted and proud. When Oxford wished to confer on him an honorary degree he felt highly honored, of course. But the great joy of work was at home.

In this world of the teacher to which he was devoted, he carried on endless research. When he was confronted by the teacher's much discussed choice between teaching and research, he said, "Thank you, I'll take both."

In his own explorations the range that he covered was so wide that some persons actually believed that there were at least two persons named G. L. Kittredge writing at the time. He was interested in such matters as Increase Mather's views on smallpox, the ballads of Kentucky, the vocabulary of the Australasians, the history of witchcraft, the history of words for popular reading, cowboy songs, the early Teutonic notions of immortality, the toad in folklore, Chaucer on marriage, the history of religion, and scores of subjects thought of as more strictly within the field of language and literature. And his books ranged from *Chaucer and His Po-*

etry to The Old Farmer and His Almanack — and manuals of grammar and composition for high schools.

It was at Barnstable, down on the Cape, that he was able to do much of his own work. For there he had long summer weeks that were little interrupted. If one chanced to be at the house on Hilliard Street in Cambridge just when he was about to go away for the summer, one might well decide that he was leaving for all time, so completely did he seem to be transferring his scholarly effects. Eventually he built a study a little away from the house in Barnstable so that he might work in entire seclusion, with only the cheerful voices of his children and their friends on the tennis court to remind him pleasantly — if he heard them at all — that he was not completely isolated in time and space.

On the Cape, too, he could be elementally refreshed. On the Cape, he was happy to say, he — or his son — had come upon the perfect pessimist, a native who grew chickens. When it was suggested that a few chicks just outside a coop were sturdy youngsters, the native replied, "Yes, but the trouble is, the old hen hatched out six, and by God all of them have died on me but five."

The Cape was heaven for work; yet back in Cambridge in the autumn he carried his own work right along with his teaching — and thereby constantly gave his teaching enrichment. He moved briskly from his classroom to Gore Hall, and very quickly disappeared. Then one came upon him somewhere deep in the stacks, lost to the immediate world over a puzzling text or fat galleys of proofs. The library was nothing musty and dead for him. It was man recorded. When the great new Widener Memorial Library was spoken of as an elephant among the other buildings in the Yard, he asked, "What if it is? You could destroy all the other Harvard buildings to the northward, and with Widener left standing, still have a university."

If days were not long enough, always there were nights. Like Charles Péguy, he considered night as the part of existence that holds everything together, that is sacred to man "wherein he accomplishes his being." But for Professor Kittredge this was not to be done through sleep; it was to be done through work.

For many years one of his intimate friends walked from Boston to Cambridge on Sunday afternoon, had supper with the Kittredges, and then the two read Greek together till eleven o'clock — as relaxation. But that still left the body of the night ahead. So, too, was it when his "ballad course" met at his house in the evening, and some of the most enthusiastic lingered a little in the big study. It was when his own house had become quiet, and the lights in houses everywhere were beginning to disappear, and the roar of the city had lost its nearness, and the world was otherwise losing the last signs of its daytime confusion, that he knew freedom. In the

enveloping quiet he could give himself to work without fear of distraction. If he felt the need of diversion, he could read one more detective story.

When Mrs. Kittredge chanced to know at two or two-thirty or three in the morning that he was still at work, she would slip down and remind him that it was time for him to be getting some sleep. Very obediently he would go off to bed for the rest of the night. In the course of years, Mrs. Kittredge wearied a little of making the trip downstairs and had an electric bell installed with a button by her bed. But he did not like it. In the perfect quiet of night it made him jump. Sometimes nobody reminded him that he ought to be in bed, and he did not think of the matter himself; and when Thomas the chore man slipped into the study at six in the morning to build a new fire, there sat Professor Kittredge peacefully asleep in his comfortable chair before the empty fireplace, with one hand clutching a book on the arm of the chair as firmly as if he were awake. On such a night he did not get to bed at all.

4

WHEN a vivid man does a sufficient number of things that are unfailingly characteristic, legend begins to attach itself to his name. And when he lives on and on through one college generation after another until men who were in his classes almost a half-century before come back to visit their grandsons in the freshman class and find him still teaching with the same old fire, the contributions of legendary instance mount till they constitute a kind of running supplemental biography.

Men argued over the original color of his hair and beard, for he was gray — or white — so early that nobody could quite remember him when he was not gray or white. They liked to speak, too, of the fact that "Kitty" never bothered with any degree except an A.B. They laughed over the gushing woman who asked in disappointment why he had never taken a Ph.D., and his supposed reply: "Who would have examined me?" Or they repeated the story of the famous woman college president who wished a Harvard man as an instructor in English, but said she could not consider anyone who lacked a Ph.D., and of Charles Townsend Copeland's stentorian reply to her: "Thank God, then we'll not lose Kittredge!"

Legend was helped, too, by the fact that in his highly charged life there was always unpredictable heartening for the less positive, the less courageous. When a frightened young candidate for honors in English had to say in reply to a question, "I'm afraid I can't answer; I have not read all of Wordsworth," Professor Kittredge brought him quickly to life and confidence by replying: "Neither have I! I couldn't be hired to!" When the efficiency

experts were rising up everywhere in institutions, and one of them asked Professor Kittredge just how many hours and minutes it took him to prepare one of his "lectures" on Shakespeare, he replied: "I refuse to answer. It's one of my trade secrets." Then he relented and said, "Just a lifetime — can't you see that?" When graduate students in the field of English made their way to Professor K. G. T. Webster's house at Gerry's Landing for a relaxing great dinner and then a joyous session on the third floor in a room that some of the guests thought of as an Anglo-Saxon mead-hall, Professor Kittredge was always so full of wit and generosity of spirit that the guests were stirred to believe they could face anything.

So there he was, about to be seventy-five, full of fiery power, and seemingly without a thought that he had already taught ten years past the usual retiring age. He walked energetically through the traffic of Harvard Square and the policeman said bravely but so that Professor Kittredge would be sure not to hear: "Be a little careful there, Santa Claus!" In the Yard the general assumption seemed to be that nobody quite dared to tell him that he must retire.

On his seventy-fifth birthday when he went to his class at Radcliffe, the girls had put seventy-five magnificent crimson roses on his desk.

What was this they had done? Often enough he had scolded them. Sometimes he had walked out on them when they did not come up to his expectations in brilliance. And now they had remembered him in this fashion. They had almost taken an unfair advantage of him — so startling was it all. He told them — and suddenly he was deeply touched — that he found it difficult to express his great appreciation. "If it would help, I'd declare a holiday. And I do hereby declare a holiday." Then quite as suddenly he recovered his usual manner, looked up, and said with a self-defiant kind of smile: "Now if only some of you will tell me how to get them home without looking like a bridegroom!"

At home he admitted modestly to his wife that not every man received that many roses from his girl students on his seventy-fifth birthday. In the afternoon when one of his former students and his wife dropped in to offer best wishes, he was in the happiest of moods. He told them how near he had come to being born on the twenty-ninth of February. He admitted in great joviality that undergraduates had at times led him to make "characteristic remarks" and do "characteristic things," and he drew out of the past a few instances himself. Yes, he supposed he would be giving up teaching sooner or later, for he had in mind finishing that annotated edition of such plays of Shakespeare as had interested him most, and that would keep him busy for a number of years ahead.

And so it did.



It was after several visits to the National Gallery in Washington to see the paintings from the Berlin galleries that WALTER LIPPMANN, made newly aware of the inaccessibility of most great works of art, reached these conclusions about the museum of the future. This paper is the substance of an address delivered at the annual meeting of the American Association of Museums.

THE MUSEUM OF THE FUTURE

by WALTER LIPPMANN

1

WHAT I shall talk about in this article defined itself in my mind after visiting the museum in Pasadena to see once more the Huntington collection, and after visits to the National Gallery in Washington — first to see the paintings from the Berlin galleries, and then to see the crowds of people who were climbing over one another to see the paintings from the Berlin galleries.

There in California were collections of fine pictures, precious books, and unique manuscripts, which had come finally to rest in a sanctuary as perfect and as secure as the ingenuity and good will of man can provide. They are in a building which is fireproof, earthquakeproof, air conditioned. They are guarded like the children of a king by a corps of doctors, nurses, courtiers, and secretaries. They live in a place so happily of no importance to any military strategist that no general staff would waste an atomic bomb on them.

And by contrast, there in Washington were the pictures from the Berlin galleries, refugees from the retribution Hitler had brought down upon Berlin, dug up from the salt mine in which they were buried, and now homeless wanderers — destined to return to the land which could become the vortex of the most terrible cataclysm in all history.

The contrast is dramatic; and meditating on it, I said to myself that if all goes well in the best of all possible worlds, the unique and irreplaceable possessions of civilized men — at least all those that can be moved — will be preserved against the vicissitudes of nature, and the destructiveness of men, in sanctuaries like that in California.

And then a disturbing thought occurred to me. The experience of man, and the creations, inventions, discoveries of men throughout the ages and in an infinite variety of circumstances, transcend our personal lives and our immediate interests. This inheritance is worth collecting and preserving and using — whatever our transient hopes and fears.

Without it the life of man would, as Hobbes said in another connection, be empty, nasty, brutish, and short.

For if there were nothing for the spirit to work upon except its own reactions to musings upon the immediate moment of time and a small spot of space, the freedom of the human spirit would be vagrant and trivial. Without the accumulated achievements of the past to work upon, the freedom of men would be limited by the necessity of rediscovering and of repeating endlessly that which has already been discovered and experienced. And since life is short and art is long, not much would be discovered, and little would be created.

Yet the supply of masterpieces of art and unique objects of great value is limited, whereas all over the world, in every nation and in every city there is a rising demand by greater and greater masses of people for access to these masterpieces and unique objects.

It is evident that there are not enough of them to stock the younger and newer museums. The epoch of the great private collectors, which began in the sixteenth century, is quite evidently nearing its end in the twentieth century. The masterpieces of the past which were once owned by private individuals are passing into the hands of governments and corporate foundations. Except by military conquest, there is less and less likelihood that they will be redistributed. They are not for sale, as once they were, because the heirs of the original collector were not interested in keeping them or were forced to dispose of them. Broadly speaking, it may be said, therefore, that once masterpieces and unique objects pass into the possession of existing museums, they have reached their final resting place and are removed forever from the market.

Except against the furious destructiveness of modern war, the vandalism of mobs, and the risks of natural catastrophes, the works which are mov-

able will have been deposited in museums which are sanctuaries for the preservation of the relics.

But how, then, are the great masses to be given access to their cultural inheritance? A few, but only a few, can travel about the world visiting all the museums, making their pilgrimages to the sanctuaries. Only a few museums, here and there, can have collections which are remotely representative even of the elements of the great cultural traditions. In the nature of things, the works they possess are bound to be accidental and arbitrary — to be collections of bits and pieces — a portrait head from Egypt in Berlin, the Elgin marbles in London, a Rubens in Cleveland, two dozen English paintings from the eighteenth century in southern California.

The problem becomes clearer if we compare the visual arts with literature. Suppose that a lover of literature had to go to London to read *Hamlet*, to Paris to read *Macbeth*, to Rome to read *The Tempest*, to Boston for some of the Sonnets, to Chicago for others; suppose he had to go back to London, or Paris, or Rome, or Boston, every time he wanted to read a work by Shakespeare. The enjoyment and the appreciation of literature would be a problem like that of the enjoyment and appreciation of the fine arts.

To put the matter this way is to pose the obvious question, which has occurred to everyone who has thought about the problem. That is whether the unique objects can be made generally accessible through reproductions. My friend John Walker, Curator of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, states that nearly sixty years ago there was a proposal by one F. W. Smith, which was seriously considered at the time, to build within the District of Columbia on an area of sixty-two acres "a wonderful agglomeration of magnificent edifices . . . full size models of various monuments of all countries throughout the ages . . . and filled with casts and copies of historic objects."

Mr. Walker says that this curious and fantastic project was very nearly undertaken. No doubt we may be thankful that it was not. But the basic idea cannot be dismissed: it is one we are compelled to entertain when we face the fact that the supply of unique objects is so limited and the public demand for access to them so unlimited.

Only recently André Malraux, who probably has never heard of F. W. Smith, said that "the idea of a democratic culture which seemed vague and suspect in the nineteenth century has grown clear and valid in the twentieth century because of the development of the techniques for reproducing works of art." . . . "Painting and music," he said, "have at last discovered their printing press."

I wonder whether the directors of museums will not have to come to grips with the whole complicated question of copies of works of fine art. One can imagine, I venture to think, that the museum

of the future will have two departments — one the sanctuary where the unique objects, the irreplaceable relics, are preserved and exhibited for the veneration and the enjoyment of those who make the pilgrimage; the other department in effect a library for the student, the scholar, and the amateur, where they can find, as in any library, collected in one place and readily accessible to them various editions of the unique objects which are scattered in the sanctuaries all over the world.

It is interesting in this connection to remember that the most famous museum of ancient times, the Museum of Alexandria, was, so the *Encyclopædia Britannica* says, a great library and home for scholars and that the conception of a museum as a collection of antiquities is quite modern.

2

A CRUCIAL question, obviously, is how far the technique of reproduction has been perfected, and in what measure indeed it could be perfected. Any edition of Shakespeare's plays which has been proof-read accurately gives a reader as good access to Shakespeare's art as if he owned one of the first folios now deposited in the Folger Library. Is there something about a work of fine art which can never even in theory be copied? Is the work which the master himself put his hand to unique in its essence? And if it is, is this uniqueness in fact aesthetic? Or is it — assuming that an indistinguishable copy could be made — sentimental and historical?

I suspect that questions like these cannot be answered dogmatically, and that probably no one should attempt to answer them dogmatically. When Malraux says that painting has found its printing press, the answer surely is — not yet. Even an untrained eye can see that the color and texture of paintings are not now faithfully reproduced. But can one say that if the effort were made to reproduce them faithfully, that if the research were promoted and endowed, eventually modern technology could not arrive at the equivalent of the printing press?

In the meantime, and as an inducement to remain open-minded, it may be useful to analyze the idea of the unique object, attempting to isolate that which is aesthetic from that which is sentimental, historical, and, if I may say so, monopolistic.

It is an interesting exercise in criticism to inquire into the purely aesthetic reaction which the one and only original is uniquely able to produce. I think anyone who visited the National Gallery in London last season and saw Philip Hendy's exhibit of cleaned and uncleaned pictures must have come away from it not quite so clear as he once was; no longer naïvely certain that he had been reacting aesthetically to the original work of the master rather than to a joint and changing product in

which the first artist had collaborated with time and circumstances across the centuries.

But of all the many facets of this problem of the work of art as a unique object, there is one which bears especially upon the theme that I have been discussing. Not all the paintings which are exhibited in museums are indubitably the original work of a surely identified artist. This fact has given rise to a fascinating profession — that of the connoisseurs who determine the attributions and perform in the world of art the functions of Sherlock Holmes and J. Edgar Hoover.

Theirs is, I have always thought, an enviable profession, full of mystery and romance. The innocent child who has been disowned and forgotten is recognized at last as the true prince of the realm, and the villainous pretender is cast into outer darkness and stored in the cellar. I look upon the great man-hunts of the connoisseurs as a preview of how we shall pass the time in the brave new world of the future when all the problems of war and poverty and class and caste have been solved, and we need thrillers — not as now to put us to sleep but to keep us awake.

The existence among us of these aesthetic sleuths is good evidence, I think, that the enjoyment of art is not altogether a simple, intuitive reaction in the presence of a masterpiece. If it were, what difference did it make that the alleged Vermeer in Rotterdam, which was so greatly enjoyed by lovers of Vermeer, was proved to have been the work of a modern forger? If all that matters is the purely aesthetic effect, then what is the purpose of the whole apparatus of scholarship, the search of the documents, the X-rays, and the chemical tests?

Does not our concern with attribution indicate that for modern men aesthetic enjoyment is almost inseparable from knowledge, that feeling alone does not satisfy us, but needs the support of understanding — so that if I may take the liberty of paraphrasing Plotinus, our passions may be intellectual and our intellects passionate? I think it does, and that is one more reason, and perhaps the most conclusive of all, why modern museums can no longer be, as they were a generation ago, places where original works are preserved and exhibited — why they are becoming also libraries and laboratories of research and education.

For the unique objects which any one museum can possess, however fine each of them may be, are incapable of satisfying the need to understand, the need to see not only the unique object, as such, in isolation, but to see it in the context of the whole work of the artist and of his school and of his period and of his culture. Without the context, which depends on the apparatus of knowledge, aesthetic enjoyment — because of the arbitrary and random scattering of works of art all over the world — would be mere eclecticism, the expenditure of emotion on a series of disconnected, unrelated, and inherently meaningless objects. For only knowledge can impose order and intelligibility upon the feelings and passions, which, if they are excited capriciously, can never be satisfied, and become diseased. Thus it is only by the cultivation of the knowledge of the comparative history of art that modern men, exposed as they are to odd collections of bits and pieces of the creative work of all the ages, can begin to cope with the flux and the chaos of modernity.

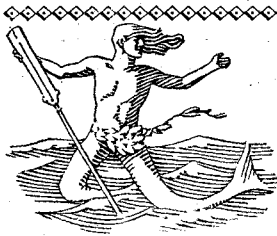
"I PERSONALLY" AWARDS

OVER the years the *Atlantic* has established the claim of publishing the work of more new writers than any other national magazine in the country. This is particularly true in the field of nonfiction: here, the *Atlantic* has brought into print a succession of autobiographical narratives, the true stories of men and women who have shared with the reader the truth, the humor — and the difficulties — of a singular experience.

Remember Mary Antin, the impassioned immigrant, who spoke for millions in her touching account of "The Promised Land"; Lucy Furman, who wrote so tellingly of the Kentucky mountaineers; Eleanor Risley, operating — on a shoestring — her apple orchard in the Ozarks; and far north, Hilda Rose on her Stump Farm. Bill Adams and Hugo Johanson sent us their salty stories of the sea.

There were Nora Waln in the House of Exile, Agnes Newton Keith in North Borneo, and Betty MacDonald on her incomparable Egg Farm. Every one of them broke into print in the *Atlantic*.

To encourage more of such stories we have set up three awards of \$1000 for the three best autobiographical narratives submitted before December 1, 1948. The stories must be drawn from experience and be veritable in detail. The awards are not intended for war material, and fiction will be disqualified. The length is for each writer to determine, but we suggest manuscripts of not less than 2500 words or more than 25,000 words. The narratives may be written by an amateur or by a professional writer. On page 1 the contestant should write "For the I Personally Award"; and postage, we hope, will be enclosed. — THE EDITORS



The Atlantic Serial



LAUGHTER IN THE NEXT ROOM

by SIR OSBERT SITWELL

As a Captain in the Grenadier Guards, Osbert Sitwell came unscathed through the heavy fighting in Flanders, and with the final victory in 1918 he, his sister Edith, and his younger brother Sacheverell turned to the arts with a new sense of release and opportunity.

His friends and acquaintances included Shaw, Mary Webb, Bertrand Russell, T. S. Eliot, the Huxleys, Roger Fry, Maynard Keynes, Virginia Woolf, Siegfried Sassoon, Isadora Duncan — the seething artistic and literary and fashionable world of a London newly awakened from the long night of the First World War. Osbert Sitwell gives us charming, unconventional portraits of these people.

*Then he comes to his father. For years Osbert waged a running fight with Sir George, first over the kind of education his father thought suitable, then over Osbert's choice of a profession. To the end, Sir George fought to force his sensitive and artistic son into a mold of his own design. In defense, Osbert worked out a formula for Sons Who Have Difficult Fathers: to be inventive, even fantastic, in all their dealings with their fathers. He invents mythical hostesses who entertain him; he invents a mythical yacht; and in this final installment of *Laughter in the Next Room*, the new volume of his autobiographical series, Osbert at last has his way.*

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IF BY birth mine was a dangerous inheritance, and although I possessed, as I did, most difficult parents, of whom to be the son, alone, without attempting any other labor, would have constituted a profession in itself, at least I was privileged, at times plunged in great misery, at times flooded with the frustrated laughter of both high and low comedy, to watch a unique combination and interplay of forces, an unrivaled disruption of powers and dispersion of assets, and, further, to observe at close — often, uncomfortably close — range, one of the most singular characters of his epoch. At a time when people of his kind, of similar derivation, were declining in vigor and in the originality of their character, and becoming lazy in the use of their minds, my father provided a last flash of the old fire.

I must confess that his fantasies, the System chief among them, and all his individual ways of thought attained their fullest range and sweep in the years following the Armistice. During several years, he had seven sitting rooms in his own occupation as studies, and in three or four of these stood a specimen, straddling a sofa, of the desk he had designed in order to enable him to write more easily when lying down. All his papers he kept on the floor, so that each resembled a drift of dusty snow, or a beauty spot after a public holiday. The majority of

documents, some of them folded and done up with red tape, others overflowing from boxes or, again, just loose and ready as an angel's wings to float up to heaven on any casual draft, related to a lawsuit he was conducting against the coal lessees: the rest was concerned with his customary interests, pedigrees, household economies, heraldry, decorative furniture, summaries of his financial transactions with me, or consisted of notes on practical farming, on the Use of Ceremony in Byzantine Court Life, on the Origin of the Medieval Romances, the Buildings of the Emperor Frederick II in South Italy, or the Black Death — of course — and on his own Inventions, possible and impossible.

In these he had recently been taking a renewed interest. In the summer of 1923, when he had been staying in London, he had sent for me to see him one afternoon on an urgent matter. When I entered his room, he rose from his bed, in which he had been resting, locked the door so as to be sure we should not be interrupted, and then went back to bed again. In a low voice, he confided in me: —

“You know, Osbert, I sometimes have an idea with money in it.”

“Yes, Father.”

“Well” — he gave a long dry laugh like a cackle — “I’ve just produced an egg.”

He waited a little to allow me to look astonished,

which certainly I did — sufficiently, even, I think, to satisfy him.

Gratified, he continued: "It's a breakfast egg. . . . The yolk will be made of smoked meat, the white, of compressed rice, and the shell, of synthetic lime — or a coating of lime. It will be delicious, will last forever, and be ready at any time. It wouldn't matter where you might be, in the desert or on a polar expedition, all you'd have to do would be to boil it for two or three minutes, as you wish — and there would be your breakfast, ready for you, and very nourishing and sustaining. You'd feel wonderfully fit after it, ready to do a real day's hard work. It may make the whole difference to explorers!"

"What a good idea; you ought to patent it at once."

"As a matter of fact, that's why I want to consult you. I would like to make a little money for Sachie after I am gone — but how am I to place my egg on the market? . . . I thought perhaps I'd see Selfridge's about it — they seem very go-ahead. But whom shall I ask for, and how shall I announce the reason for my visit? I daren't trust my egg to anyone else — it might be stolen."

"I should ask for Mr. Gordon Selfridge himself. Tell the commissionaire to take you up in the lift, and just step into Mr. Selfridge's sanctum, saying, 'I'm Sir George Sitwell, and I've brought my egg with me!'"

"Capital idea! That is what I will do. Thank you so much, dear boy: I knew you would help me."

Accordingly, he set off for the Oxford Street shop the next morning at eleven: he was dressed in a silk hat and a frock coat — an article of dress already, even then, nearly extinct — and carried a bundle of papers, with diagrams on them. . . . He was very late for luncheon when he returned, and though his eye seemed to rest on me with a certain coldness, he never explained what had happened during the interview, if it took place. My mother did not like to ask him, nor subsequently did he ever refer to the egg again. Yet it had in no whit discouraged him for I noticed on the floor of one of his studies that the sheaf entitled *Inventions* had grown much more bulky of recent months.

It was, as he often explained, much more convenient to keep everything on the floor. "I know exactly where to find what I want, and can put my hand on it at any moment!" he would say. So that, now, when the coal lawsuit had just been settled out of court, it was with regret that he began a retreat, and rather ruefully de-requisitioned one sitting room after another, surrendering them again to the use of the family. But though circumstances obliged him to do this, for he had grown to like many guests to come to the house in August and September, and otherwise there would have been nowhere for them to sit, nevertheless in no least respect did he modify his ideas, moderate his conceptions, or

abate his flights. Indeed latterly he had coined several new slogans to express his individual sentiments, at last developed to their utmost capacity, and when, having risen from his bed to come down after dinner, he sat by himself, in full evening dress, white tie and waistcoat, in the ballroom in the middle of his Regency sofa, very long, and supported by a carved and painted lion at either end, so that he resembled a Byzantine Emperor on his throne, he would often at this hour, and always to the delight of his children, enunciate his favorite command disguised as a request: —

"I must ask anyone entering the house never to contradict me or differ from me in any way, as it interferes with the functioning of the gastric juices and prevents my sleeping at night."

Albeit I tried to persuade him to have this notice printed on cards, and to cause one of them to be placed on the chimney-piece of each room in the house, my efforts, though they came very near success, ended in failure.

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DURING the late summer, in the decade following the war, we entertained nearly every year a large house party. Some members of it were invited by my father and mother, others by me, who acted as host. Among my guests was often Constant Lambert, who came on his first visit to us in August, 1923, when there were about twenty persons staying in the house. He arrived in time for dinner, at which my father, whose acquaintance he had yet to make, was not present (for very frequently in these years, my father would go to bed for dinner and come down afterwards, without warning, so as to give us all a jump, and clothed, of course, in full evening dress). Constant was only eighteen, and, since this was his first large house party, was very alert and rather nervous. In consequence, he was punctual to the minute in coming down to breakfast at nine o'clock in the dining room. He found it empty, though the table was laid, and the air was full of the savor of breakfast dishes. A plume of steam hovered in the air from a Viennese coffee machine on a sideboard. An almost electric tension brooded in the emptiness, as if anything might occur at any moment. The young musician, however, concentrated on eggs and bacon and coffee, and sat down, with his back to the chimney, and facing the sash windows.

Suddenly, the strange happening for which subconsciously he had been waiting occurred: for, looking towards the window opposite him, he was amazed to see the distinguished, bearded, medieval face of an elderly gentleman, crowned with a large gray felt hat, pass just outside, in a horizontal position — as if he had fallen prone and were about to raise himself — and holding a Malacca walking stick in his mouth. The vision of this venerable

figure proceeding on all fours was startling in its unexpectedness, and strongly recalled to the mind of him who beheld it Blake's picture of Nebuchadnezzar, though it is true that the Babylonish king was notably less spruce in appearance, and that his counterpart was plainly English, and lacked those memorable nails shaped like the claws of birds. Constant hurried to the window, looked out — and realized what was happening. It was — it must be — my father, at work, and carrying his cane in this unusual manner in order to observe the views and measure from the new level — for he intended to drop the lawn three or four feet and so, in his present position, was at the height of a man standing at the altitude he planned. . . . But even though Constant knew in his heart who it must be, he was too bewildered to mention what he had seen to the other guests, who now came into the dining room, filling it with their chatter.

A distinguished archaeologist was also staying in the house at this time, being engaged in excavating for my father the problematic site of the Norman Manor of Eckington, held by the Estutevilles. The place having been arbitrarily selected, not one stone remained aboveground, or was found under it, to suggest that such a building had ever existed. Even Professor Voxall, I apprehend, was surprised when one morning he dug up a bottle of truffles and a tarantula spider set out on a board; objects which my brother and I, tired of this futile exercise of my father's and of its expense, had, the day before, buried there for the expert to discover. While at Renishaw, this learned man was afflicted with a return of malaria, from which he suffered, having contracted it in the East during the war.

When I went to tell my father that his guest was indisposed and would be obliged to stay upstairs for dinner, I found him in bed resting. I ended with the words, "I only hope he's not dangerously ill. It's malaria!" The reaction was immediate. Plainly my father was taking no risks. Almost before I had finished speaking, he had whisked out of bed and rung the bell, and when it was answered, he said curtly, "Robins, bring me my mosquito net!" Thereafter, for a month, he slept under it.

35

MY MOTHER spent much time in her bedroom: for she had now a Swiss maid, and had to her delight learned that Frieda could yodel. One of the endearing traits in my mother's character was that she could never have enough of a good thing, and so she was continually sending for Edith, Sacheverell, and me to help her to persuade her maid to perform. The entertainment delighted her, and she would sit in her chair, her face creased, her whole body shaking with laughter. The Swiss girl did not notice, for she was very shy, and would only consent to perform for us if hidden by a screen: but once installed

behind her Japanese panels of black embroidered with bumpy storks in gold thread, she would tirra-lirra her heart out.

My sister was usually successful in inducing Frieda to yodel to us, for she was her pupil, taking yodeling lessons every day. So we would all gather there, in my mother's room with its gay but faded paper of bunches of flowers, and its niche and eighteenth-century cornice; my mother in the armchair, near the wide open window, where the sun-drenched scent of the sweet green leaves she loved came in at her. My sister would be sitting on the bed. Now a person of the utmost distinction and beauty, with her long slender limbs, and long-fingered hands, and the musing but singularly sweet expression which always distinguished her, she belonged to an earlier, less hackneyed age, in which the standards of Woolworth mass production did not exist (in fact, as an American is said to have remarked in front of her portrait in the Tate Gallery, "Lord, she's gothic, gothic enough to hang bells in!").

My mother, who had so cruelly ill-used her, had come to love her society, her wit and perception, and it was symptomatic of Edith's fineness of character that she responded and, now that my mother was growing old and her spirits flagging, set herself, at a great waste of her own energy and time, to amuse her — and there was little else one could do for her. Edith, then, would be sitting on the bed; and on a very straight Chippendale chair, but thrown backward and supported in front by his own two long legs, Sacheverell would balance his tall frame. His appearance at that age — twenty-five or -six — his very handsome head, with hair curling at the sides, and with its cut and contours so Italian in essence, but so northern in color, translated perfectly the strange power and intensity that have always been his, the generous warmth of his temperament, so genial and impulsive, the passion of many kinds that burns in him — passion for people, for books, for learning, for works of art, for old lamps that can be lit again at his fire — the wit, so distinguished and apt, which he so despises in himself and does nothing to cultivate, instead preferring the jokes of others which he so immensely enjoys: the flash, deep as bright, of his anger, large as the scale of his mind and frame; but never enduring, breaking down eventually into a smile, though by no means an easy smile.

Meanwhile, I, with my rather heavy mask and build, would be seated in an armchair opposite. Frieda's shelter was in front of the door, and sometimes, just as her voice had reached to the top of a high mountain, and was preparing to receive answer from another, my father, attracted by the sound, and always liking to know what was going on, would bolt in and find himself enclosed with her behind the Japanese screen. He was tall enough for his bearded face, which recalled more vividly every day the Italian paintings of the Renaissance — he

was at no great distance from the portrait of Cesare Borgia or of the Grand Turk by Bellini and the heads of effigies of the same or an earlier epoch on tombs — to show, just above the top of the screen, with an expression of extreme and dignified distaste. He would say nothing — indeed he could not make himself heard, for the maid had not noticed his entry and continued her song, until, a few minutes later, she suddenly saw him and stopped. Standing on tiptoe, and blushing, she would then peep over the barrier, and say, “Please m’lady, I cannot go on with my music.”

My mother, still laughing, would say, with an effort at control, “I wish you wouldn’t always interrupt, George. You’re just like an *auguste* — must always be in everything!” He would go out, with that particular lowering of one shoulder that meant that he would not forget and would think out countermeasures for use later on.

36

IT WAS during one of these summers at Renishaw, so like in tone, that Constant Lambert enjoyed another curious adventure. Very tired after conducting, he had come to spend a few days with us. My father was in the middle of a course of Nauheim baths to relieve his heart, which he alleged to be overstrained, and — for the cure has to be done by degrees — had reached the stage where the treatment becomes the most rigorous, and the whole day has to be given up to it and to resting. There was a nurse in attendance, and she had just prepared his bath, melting the salts in it, and had left the room, to let it cool for a while, when Constant entered, knowing nothing of all this — for he had only arrived the previous evening — and, seeing a bath ready and steaming for him, as he thought, leaped into it.

The nurse now returned, and finding the door locked, realized what had happened. She knew my father would be furious if he found out she had allowed someone to have his bath. There was not time to prepare another (for to get the water to the right temperature, with the salts properly dissolved in it, was by no means a short process). Under these circumstances she showed presence of mind. Regarding my father with an expression that plainly said “Something is wrong with you,” she seized his wrist, felt his pulse, and with a note in her voice both of surprise and of gravity, observed that it was far too rapid, and counseled that it would be most unwise for him today to have such drastic treatment as the bath provided. As for Constant, he thoroughly enjoyed the bath, and stayed in a good while. But he developed a curious blue tinge in his complexion for all the remainder of the day, and for at least a week complained of singular palpitations and of a feeling of utter exhaustion.

Though such incidents continued at Renishaw,

yet as I look back, 1924 appears to have been unequalled for excitements of this sort. Perhaps it was because the object for which I had striven so long was near to attainment. I had persuaded my father to emigrate — to Italy. He was always far happier there, and I had long realized that he was one of the fortunate few whose energies and wish to control those round them increase and strengthen with age — he was now sixty-four. I had my own work, and so had my sister and my brother, theirs. There was no hope of any of his three children being allowed to have a career, unless he could be persuaded to go. The general atmosphere which was always menacing, the interruptions, the scenes, the surprises, and the ambushes laid, the fussing, the necessity my father felt both for consulting and for contradicting me, the economies, the extravagances, all put it beyond possibility to write a line when our parents were in the house. Though I realized that they, of course, would continue to visit me from time to time for long periods in England, and I should have to stay with them in Italy, yet their residence abroad would induce a new feeling of rest and freedom in the air.

As an inducement to him, there was Montegufoni, with its enormous house and garden, just waiting to be “improved”! He liked the idea; “I shall be known as the Italian Sir George,” he remarked — though I never could make out by whom. Meanwhile there was much to be done. He shut up Wood End and moved all the furniture, which he had brought from Italy, from there to Renishaw — special furniture vans were simply hurtling about on the railway — sorted it, added to it pieces he had imported similarly to Renishaw, and then moved the whole lot back to Italy. The same patient frieze of workmen whom we saw in *The Scarlet Tree* — and still without their special felt shoes — plodded by impassively with articles of furniture, backwards and forwards, or placed and extended their ladder, to the same music of my father’s perpetual “No, no, no: all wrong!”

Sometimes a guest lying in bed would be startled by my father, at the head of his troupe, bursting in and proceeding to remove all the furniture. Neither he nor the workmen would heed protests, and the poor victim, as my father went on, remorselessly, inexorably, to dismantle the room, would begin to believe himself invisible and inaudible, indeed almost to doubt his own existence. At last, he might be able to get through some remote hint, as though it were a message in a bottle, to my mother, who would at once stop Frieda’s yodeling, send for my father, and say: —

“George, you can’t do that!”

“Somebody has to do the work, Ida. I don’t know how it would get done without me! It is a great strain on my health.”

My mother repeated to herself softly the refrain of a famous clown’s song: “A terrible lot to do to-

day, to do today, to do today. A terrible lot to do today, to do to do today."

"You ought to take things more easily," she would urge.

"But how can I? Everybody on the place sometimes has a holiday. But I can never afford to take one!"

"Nonsense, George."

"And none of the work is for myself," he pointed out. "It's all for others."

"Yes, but you know," I interposed, "that in most cases the people you are doing it for have asked you not to do it."

"I'm afraid I can't help that! It's the right thing to do — and now most of it will have to wait until I'm able to visit Renishaw — if I'm spared!" . . . And a look of dejection spread over his face, as he thought of how he was setting out, to make his way in the world all over again.

My mother took the change philosophically, except for her fear that she would not get the English newspapers punctually. "The Government muddle everything," she would remark.

Certainly it was a new life for my father and mother. . . . The first night was to be spent at Boulogne because a long journey, he averred, tired his back, and probably too, because, an ancient town, it had lain on the old Pilgrims' Route — a fact which always now greatly influenced the direction of his traveling.

37

OUR adventures, which ranged in tone from tragedy to farce and back again, started on the cross-Channel steamer, where my mother sat on deck, near a couple of parents who were on their way to visit the grave of their son who had been killed at the Battle of the Somme in 1918. On the boat, the poor father had a heart attack; his first one. My mother, with a kindly impulse to help, said, "I've the very thing. The doctor has given me some stuff for the heart. Call Frieda, and tell her to get it out of my bag!" Unfortunately, the action of my mother's heart was fast, that of the traveler slow: the medicine at once further retarded it, and he grew rapidly worse. At Boulogne, an ambulance had to be called to meet him at the quay. My father sat near-by, watching, and remarking from time to time, "One day your mother will be the death of someone!" or, "Poor man, you'd have thought having to go to see his son's grave was enough!" . . . I never heard whether he recovered.

Meanwhile it was found that my father had told his servant to register all the luggage through to Paris, where we were not going: there was no way of obtaining it until the next day, and we were doomed to pass a miserable night without our belongings, at Boulogne, in a large seaside hotel with

interior walls of a paperlike thinness. By the time we arrived at the hotel my father, unprepared for the brand of gothic discomfort with which he was thus faced — the System had been put out of action by the loss of equipment — was in a far from good humor. My brother and I went upstairs to see our bedrooms, and as we came down the double staircase, mean in its Louis-XV-hotel pretensions, we could hear my father indulging in the curious buzzing-like humming we knew so well, for he always made this noise when irritable or angry. He was walking up and down the hall with a rapid, impatient gait, just outside the dining room.

"It sounds exactly like a bluebottle," I remarked to my brother.

At that moment, my father approached, and looking in the direction of the dining room said at once, and in character, "I was just wondering which table to settle on!"

That we laughed — and it was difficult not to do so — made the atmosphere still more uneasy.

Baveno, on Lake Maggiore, was always my father's first Italian stopping place, and we set out for it the next day, going straight through on the train de luxe, while Robins and Frieda came on by a cheaper train. Directly Robins arrived he went up to my father's room. It was about two in the afternoon, and he found the old gentleman resting. He was in bed, as usual with the head of it turned against the light, so that he lay facing the door, and he was wearing a coat over his pyjamas. As Robins came in, his master looked at him severely, and remarked: "You've again forgotten my keys, Robins! I've told you repeatedly not to let me travel without them."

Robins crossed behind him, and taking up the keys, which were lying on the dressing table, beside a heavy gold watch and chain, as they had been taken out of his pocket by my father when he had undressed, said, "I knew I hadn't forgotten them. Here they are, Sir George, with your watch!"

Without looking round, my father said, "No, they're not! And by forgetting them, you've put me to a great deal of trouble and expense. I've had to break all the luggage open."

As he finished speaking, pandemonium broke loose in the passage outside. There were sounds of sobbing and shouting, even screams. Robins rushed from the room, and found two ladies, the manager, valets and porters and maids in furious altercation. He remarked, too, what he had not observed when he came in, all my mother's and father's luggage lying there, and at once noticed that there seemed more of it than usual. . . . At this moment, the quarrelers united and attacked him in a body. What did he mean by it? Had other people's property no value for him? They would call in the *carabinieri*: he would soon be in the lockup. It was a scandal! Other phrases of the same kind poured out.

The explanation of all this disturbance was that my father had not only broken open his own luggage and that of my mother, but also two large trunks which had been lying near it, outside neighboring doors. These had been placed there, packed and locked, ready to be taken to Baveno station, in order to be registered to Paris, by the train de luxe, in which the owners of the luggage were traveling. The train was due to start in an hour's time. Indeed, the two ladies had just been starting in the omnibus, when they looked for their luggage and discovered what had occurred. The locks were destroyed beyond repair, the contents lay in disorder, turned upside down, as if a Customs House Officer had been running wild through them.

Robins escaped back into my father's room, and told him what had happened. My father calmly locked the door, and said, "I'm afraid I really can't help other people's troubles."

Eventually the manager found two other trunks (my father refused to contribute a centime to the cost), and the two poor ladies hurriedly repacked and, still in a woebegone condition, just caught the ordinary passenger train, on which, no doubt, they were compelled to sit up all night.

38

THE shack in which a fresh start in life was to be made looked more imposing, immense, dilapidated, yet splendid, than ever, as we approached it that September day. We were driving in my father's motorcar, the first he had owned, and the body of which had been specially built for him. Even my father's place, however, was far from comfortable, because its antique lorry engine, if it allowed progress of any kind — since often it would go on strike altogether — would indulge in a startling series of thumps, bumps, and explosions for which, throughout the long life of this commodious instrument of torture, no adequate explanation was ever provided: and this again, since he judged even motors in terms of his own, furnished him with a very poor opinion of this whole form of locomotion. Nevertheless, today the machine conducted us decorously enough, to what was to be for their remaining years my mother's and father's home.

Montegufoni was now a very different place from what it had been when my father bought it. The courts had been cleared of their accretions of buildings, so that vistas of other rooms, and of courtyards, could be obtained from every room in the house. The vegetables, lettuces and Indian corn and tomatoes, had been removed from the terraces, and Tuscan roses bloomed month by month in their place. The oleander, in size a tree, which had been moved, flowered now in the middle of a small box parterre my father had made, in the Cardinal's Garden: but in spite of alterations, the main changes were still to come. This vast labyrinth of a building,

in which for the past thirteen years, since he had bought it, there had been perpetual discoveries and openings-up, and renovating and repainting, was, in the next fifteen years, never to know an hour's rest from structural repairs and decoration: it was being continually carried back, pinned down to a past that — like the present — only existed in my father's mind.

During this period, both my mother and my father were to find a happiness and comparative contentment they had never yet known, for my mother liked the climate, and the life in Florence, and my father enjoyed the absence of life in the house. Another rhythm and tempo had been substituted for the Renishaw comedy, those of the *Commedia dell'Arte*. The old play of my father's aloofness, and lack of interest in people, the largeness and smallness of his mind, with its contradictory layers of intense nonconformity, and yet of respect for the conventions, against my mother's unthinking, easy, unfailing sociability, and complete want of intellect or aesthetic understanding, was acted once again in this new setting, still more grandiose, romantic, and yet in a sense, derelict (for it was without life and belonged only to the theater), so that the action had now the fullest sweep and scope.

My mother, for example, would ask twenty people to luncheon, and forget to tell either my father or the butler or chef; indeed, it would pass from her mind altogether: suddenly just as my father was having a quiet early luncheon, the guests would arrive, tired after their long mountain run — that was the sort of incident which would occur regularly, affording, as it were, a theme for variation.

As for my father, nobody, when he was out of his study, would know where to find him, though he would be in the house or on the terrace: one moment he would be inspecting the well in the cellars; the next, peasants, wandering below, would be astonished to see Il Barone at the top of the tower, with his glasses to his eye. Sometimes they would think they saw him there after dusk, high up under the sky, outlined against it in the lilylike opening, until they began to believe that he was an astrologer — practicing his craft, telling the course of the future. Actually, he was more concerned with the earth than formerly. He began, too, almost to *like* people in the excitement he derived from showing them the Castello, and what he had done to it.

As yet, it was hardly a comfortable dwelling, for heating and electric light had not so far been installed, and as usual in my father's houses, the largest rooms, such as the Gallery, were badly arranged and had no chairs in which it was possible to sit with ease: he would take at least two years, sometimes ten, to think out how to dispose the furniture in one room alone. My mother slept in an ancient gilded iron bed, in a room like a cave,

divided into two halves, the outer being painted with fantastic landscapes, gardens and villas, while the sky was full of swarms of cupids, some rosy, others Negroid and equipped with bats' wings. This had not yet been furnished in character: but much had been done. In especial, my father had collected beds, the finest in Italy, great constructions supported by twisted and gilded pillars and carrying carvings of vine and rose, but, further, galleries and painted halls were all full of fine furniture and rather mediocre pictures.

He would lead the party round — the tour would take at least an hour — until he came to the chamber on the first floor painted by Gino Severini, for the idea of which my brother and I shared the responsibility. The vitality and breathing life of this administered, amid the encircling deadness, a shock to him every time he entered it. He invariably forgot its existence, opened the door — for it is a passage room — rushed in at the head of his rout, and was brought up sharp by the sight of the frescoed walls on which was depicted, more true in its purity and essence than the real landscape outside, of which it had been born, a landscape in which moved his contemporaries and companions of the *Commedia*, or sat, drinking wine, under the shade of the vines. He would gaze at them for a moment, rather sadly, until, summoning his point of view, he would give a patronizing laugh, and remark, with a strong note of disapproval in his voice, and always in Italian: “*Non è mio gusto.*”

Then he would gallop out again, followed by his motley pack. . . . Many of the visitors were distinguished in the arts, but my father and mother never knew who they were. Sometimes, therefore, when I was in England, my mother would, if she remembered the name, write to me, to make inquiries concerning the identity of her guests, or to give me a description of them. And I found that my mother's pen pictures were always more vibrant and full of point than my father's. “A Mr. D. H. Lawrence came over the other day,” she wrote, “a funny little petit-maitre of a man with flat features and a beard. He says he is a writer, and seems to know all of you. His wife is a large German. She went round the house with your father, and when he showed her anything, would look at him, lean against one of the gilded beds, and breathe heavily.”

39

TIME had supplied my father with a new foil for his comedy; another, that is to say, in addition to Henry, the butler. This was Signor Braccioforte, a charming, amiable, childlike elderly antique dealer, who had begun life as a painter. My father's only friend in Italy, he played an enthusiastic Bouvard to his Pécuchet and excelled in the pricking of the bubbles which in conjunction they had blown. Together, they would search for antique copper wash-

basins of the fifteenth century, and hatracks and coat hangers of the seventeenth. Sometimes embarking on even more abstract antiquarian wild-goose chases, they would motor for whole days at a time in each other's company.

On one occasion, for example — and it always remains in my mind as the best instance of the kind of episode which at this period of his life was so usual — my father decided to motor to Spezia along the old Pilgrims' Route, in order to identify to his own satisfaction the places mentioned in a medieval romance. Braccioforte had, of course, to go too; but worse, my father insisted that Sacheverell and I, who were staying with him at the time on one of our short visits, should also accompany him. It was plain that he was set on it, would be offended if we refused, and so the only thing was to accept the position and make the best of it. As we bumped drearily along the ancient road, in our almost equally ancient motor — already, even in those early days, known in Florence as the Ark — my brother kept on saying to me, “Don't be irritable or interfere! Leave them alone, and something funny is sure to happen!” This he said since I was inclined to be annoyed because my father had already, by his continual changing of plans, contrived to lose for me the whole of the manuscript of *B fore the Bombardment*. (It was found a few weeks subsequently.) Now, however, that he had already found much that he had wanted to see, he began to be pleased with life, and in consequence to alter less his program for each day.

It only remained for him to trace the site of the Castle of Ogier or Ogher the Dane, a celebrated character of the Romances, a Paladin of Charlemagne, and a ward of the Fairy Morgan le Fay. It was difficult, he admitted, to obtain the clue to the precise whereabouts of this stronghold, but certainly it had existed — he was sure of it — somewhere in the precise neighborhood where we now found ourselves. Happily, while he talked, the motor gave a sudden leap like a bucking horse and broke down in the piazza of a very small hill town: which, with its three converging streets of stone houses and its shop windows hung with Bologna sausages, afforded a perfect background for old-fashioned pantomime action and humor.

Braccioforte immediately got out, and wandered off down one of the crow's-foot alleys; first framing in his broken baby-English his invariable cue or theme song on such an excursion. “We go look old t'ing: maybe we find somet'ing: 'oo know?” But my father's mind at the moment was too much occupied with thoughts of the Paladin to let him join in the hunt. His eyes were carefully searching the piazza, scanning the façades. After some moments, he noticed the name over a shop, and suddenly blazed up into an excitement unusual for him. “But look over there! This must be the very place: that shop is called *Ogheri!* Probably its owners are

actually descended from the Great Dane himself! Fetch me my notebook at once; it's in my hatbox, and I'll make a note of it!" At this moment, Braccioforte, who had drifted back and had heard what my father had said, remarked: —

"But that, not *Ogheri*, Sir George; that, *Drogheria*! The first two letters and the last, they 'ave fallen themselves off: these little shop, they 'ave no money to repair."

After that, things went rather flat for a while.

During the journey, however, my father and Signor Braccioforte were engaged, as they had been for a long time, in buying breastplates and cuirasses, and other odds and ends of ironmongery, to invest the Castle Armory with an impression of authenticity. Sacheverell and I considered the money would have been better expended on the purchase of modern pictures, or upon objects of beauty in general. We became so bored with this, to us, emasculate worship of objects utterly dead, that had never possessed any aesthetic appeal, while at the same time they had long ago lost any usefulness they had formerly possessed, and so chagrined, too, at the large sum spent on their pursuit and capture that, soon after we returned to the Castle, we placed in the Armory, among the other pieces, an old stovepipe we had found in a corner of the cellar at Montegufoni. This grooved and tubular shape in iron so greatly resembled the armor in design and surface, that for about ten days my father accepted it; that is to say he did not notice it as alien and obtrusive, displayed as it was among all his other rusty acquisitions. But one afternoon Mr. and Mrs. Berenson came over to pay us a visit, and my father showed them round the Castle. When he entered the Armory, he took up the stovepipe in an absent-minded way, and remarked: —

"Rather an interesting brasset which my artist friend Signor Braccioforte and I found a week or two ago at Castel Tedesco!"

Then, as he took hold of it and lifted it up to show to them, he examined it himself more carefully, and a new expression came into his pale eyes. In a tone of disgust he remarked, "Purely puerile! . . . Another joke of the boys!"

He had, of course, no notion of Berenson's celebrity, distinction, or even identity. Indeed, as my father grew older, he plainly lost his bearings and ceased to know any longer who was alive and who, dead. On one occasion he invented a novelist who did not exist: now, in somewhat more macabre fashion he planned to give a party.

"I thought next May, I'd give an Artists' Party, Osbert," he announced to me; for artists were still a tribe, like the Levites, set apart. "May is always the best month here. And it would be nice if you two boys could come out to join me. We'd get some really interesting people together, who could be relied upon to entertain one another — far less tiring for the host!"

"Whom would you ask?" I inquired cautiously, well knowing, of course, already that he would not ask any of our own friends among painters, and was, indeed, quite unaware of their names or profession when they arrived to stay at Renishaw: nor was he likely to ask the older masters we admired, of whom Picasso was the chief. But I was startled when, as he reeled off for me the list, I comprehended both how thoroughly he had thought it out, and that all of his proposed guests, Whistler, Degas, Renoir, Rodin, Lalique, Sargent, at least possessed one thing in common: they were all dead! Some had died recently, their corpses still surrounded by candles in the press; the bones of others had been immured for years in their tombs. It would have been a party only to be thought of after the *Judgment Day*, when the dead rise up and shake on their flesh again; a party of ghosts, which would have added known names to those anonymous spirits whose presence could surely at times be detected in the sensitive, dry, Italian air of chamber and corridor.

40

MEANWHILE, a flicker of daily life was afforded by the constant coming and going to Florence of my mother, who seemed either always just on the point of leaving for the city, or to have just returned, and to be walking slowly through the courtyard with a motorload of friends she had imported.

My father usually preferred to stay behind at Montegufoni. He occupied as his study a room in a good strategical position for comedy, for it was situated right in the middle of the Castle. Moreover its three doors faced the vistas of rooms leading north, east, and west: while, in addition, a person entering any of the courtyards had to pass near-by, and the two windows to the south — the only ones except those in his bedroom wired against mosquitoes — afforded a detailed view of the terraces below. In fact, it was impossible to go from any one part of the house or garden to another, without walking by, or through, his room. It smelled of strong Turkish cigarettes. Two high painted beams obscured a ceiling frescoed with one of the several triumphs of Cardinal Acciaiuoli. Under this was a design in grisaille, and each side of the door hung, on one wall, a picture without a frame, representing the Fair at Impruneta, on the other, a frame without a picture, showing, like a mirror, a blank space of brown wall: and never, it seemed, the twain could meet.

The room was crowded with furniture, a large octagonal center table, a sideboard in *noce*, two console tables in brown and gold, with marble tops, all littered with miscellaneous objects. Its air was somewhat that of a superior — or, at times, inferior — antique dealer's private apartment, full, both of valueless possessions that he liked, and of others that, because he could not get rid of them, he had taken to himself; somewhat that, too, of a medieval

alchemist's laboratory, so that one expected to see a skull and retorts on the table. Instead, there were several early Charters, documents belonging to the Manor of Eckington, and many books on pedigrees, modern scientific thought, nineteenth-century philosophy, the Black Death (to which he still remained faithful), pamphlets on the correct methods of making coffee, volumes of photographs of Italian gardens, and innumerable fragments of which it was difficult to tell the purpose, half a cupid in carved wood, a bit of a reliquary devoured by death-watch beetles, a broken, rusty cuirass, part of an early piano front, a silver two-pronged fork, very rickety in the prongs, a coat of arms from a smashed terra-cotta vase, with a portion of a wreath of fruit attached to it, and countless scraps of brocade, tiles and petit point, as well as the lids of Venetian boxes and enameled watchcases and a few pieces of rough glass bowls and cylinders. There was a sofa for him to lie down on; but all the chairs were covered with books and boxes of papers. Between the windows stood a cupboard, full of neatly docketed cardboard boxes in a mulberry color, containing his manuscript notes, all, as usual, assembled under the wrong labels.

From this room, my father led the comedy, and directed the alterations, usually in company with Braccioforte, and a character whose name nobody ever found out. He was known as Il Professore, and it was his duty to superintend the scratching and restoring and faking that were everywhere in progress. It was difficult sometimes to tell what were the improvements on which the workmen were engaged: Once, for example, I remember my father taking me into a room where six plasterers had been employed for a fortnight, from early morning till dusk, scratching the walls like a mischief of monkeys.

"Do you notice any change here?" he asked.

And when I replied, "No, none," he said with an air of intense gratification, "Good, that's just what I've been aiming at!"

41

ROBINS had married early in 1924, and had left my father's service, entering mine once more, at Renishaw. In his place, Henry Moat had gone back to look after my father. Henry took to life at the Castello with joy. Now he presided with a still more immense dignity over my mother's luncheon parties, and the sound of his tread as he came to announce a guest was equivalent in stateliness to a procession. Henry liked the red wine, the peasant girls, the sunshine, the sleepiness. Apart from occasional attacks of the gout from which he now suffered, this period formed a long Indian summer for him as it did for my parents. While my mother was in Florence, and my father resting, Henry would retire to read in his small room upstairs, which rather resembled a

cabin. Its chief feature was a string which hung across from above the door to above the one small window. From this aerial line were suspended by wooden clips various immense pairs of trousers.

Henry's favorite book at this time was Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, which he had borrowed from me. When next he visited England with my father, spending some months there, he lent the novel to the various retired sea captains who were his friends and neighbors in the fishermen's quarter of Whitby, and who also so greatly enjoyed it that the volume was only returned to me after some two years, its pages dog-eared and covered with their powerful thumb marks. "By Gum," Henry would remark, "it's a grand book! You can fair smell them Whales!" After reading it, he associated the Great White Whale with my father, and would often refer to him under that name. Thus once at Montegufoni, as he was going to my father's room, he met Constant Lambert in the passage, and confided in him, "Moby Dick's up to his usual tricks today! . . . I don't think I can stand this job for another moment more than seven and a half years!"

The trials were, indeed, numerous. Henry would have to call my father at 5 A.M. and bring breakfast not long afterwards. My father would then read the *Times* of two days before, and other journals and letters till seven: when he would get up. At eight he would go round the Castle in detail, telling all the workmen to stop what they were doing, and do something else instead. Then he would consider the garden, interfere with the gardeners, and go back to write in his room, probably various severe letters. If he intended a letter to be really disagreeable, he would pen it many times, at each correction infusing into it a fresh but icy venom. After this fashion he would both perfect it, and also be able to keep a copy.

Luncheon would follow, usually by himself, at 11.30; then a siesta till three, when he would get up again, and go the rounds of the Castle once more, this time informing the men that they were gravely at fault, had misunderstood what he had said earlier, must undo everything they had done since, and go back to what he had stopped them doing in the morning. The Italian plasterers and painters, in their round caps made of newspaper, their light overalls, and their faces covered with fine dust from the walls, seemed thoroughly to enjoy all this. But Braccioforte and Il Professore became sunk in melancholy. "Your fader, Sir George, 'e no understand," Signor Braccioforte would say. And my mother would sometimes confide to me, "It's not very amusing for me here alone. The three of them never speak after dinner. Your father sits in one corner, looks up and says 'Ba!' Braccioforte says 'Ma!' and the Professore, 'Pa!'"

Henry, for his part, complained that during his own long absence, my father's manners had deteriorated. He had, his servant averred, aban-

doned his former dignified choice of language. Previously he had never even been known to use a single colloquialism, but now, whether due to my influence — to that knowledge of modern slang which he sometimes alleged I possessed — I do not know, Henry asserted that one morning when he approached his master, and politely asked for the settlement of an account, long overdue, my father sidled towards him, and slowly bringing his face very close to that of his servant, pronounced clearly, in quiet but menacing tones, the words: —

"Shut your ugly mug, can't you?"

"Believe me, Mr. Osbert, you could 'ave knocked me down with a feather, when I 'eard 'im demean 'imself like that," Henry added.

42

IN the summer of 1937, my mother died in London after a short illness at the age of sixty-eight. To her last days, she remained in part child, with a child's impetuosity and humor, and in part, older than her years, though she did not look more than fifty-five, and was as straight as though she had been a young woman, retaining her particular carriage of the head, so distinctive to her. She always told me that she entertained a great horror of old age. Indeed, as I drove round in a taxicab at six o'clock on a July morning to break to my father in his hotel — she had removed to a nursing home — the news of her death, there came back to me, unbidden, but perhaps with a certain cruel relevance typical of the way the human mind works on very mournful occasions such as this, a fragment of conversation from many years before. It had taken place in the dining room at Renishaw, at luncheon, on a fine August day. Only my mother, my father, and I had been present. My mother, who had been silent, suddenly observed, "How much I should hate to live to be old!"

This remark, harmless as it seemed, pierced my father's armor, and he replied, but addressing his words to me, and in that unnaturally placid voice which in his case sometimes heralded a storm, "I think all *intelligent* people would like to live to be old, wouldn't they, Osbert?"

My mother then interposed, "But I should hate to feel I was being a trouble to anyone."

And I, answering her, said, "But *really intelligent* people don't mind that, Mother."

My father had glowered at me, and had fallen back on one of his favorite rebukes, "Rude without being funny!"

That had been fifteen years ago, and now I was on my way to tell him she was dead.

In the autumn, my father returned to Italy. He seemed happiest at Montegufoni — which he seldom left — happier I think than he had ever been, though he still, I know, greatly enjoyed his rare visits to me at Renishaw. Ernest de Taeye

had, alas, died in 1934, and a new but able chief reigned in his stead over the flowers. I recall one morning that my father, during his last stay, entered the hall in an obvious state of exhaustion.

"What have you been doing?" I inquired.

"Just been showing the gardener round the garden," he replied, bestowing on this task of supererogation an air of indefinable patronage.

To a certain extent his advancing years had compelled him to cease from continual active interference in the plans of his children, for he grew tired more easily. He now relied more on a sole weapon: *will-rattling*, as Samuel Butler has described it. He continually altered or threatened to alter this document, and made a different one with several firms of solicitors. He liked from time to time, too, to stage a deathbed scene, when he would summon out for the occasion from England the ancestors of his descendants — that is to say his children. When thus sent for, I would always ask if I might see his doctor, and I remember the despairing voice of the celebrated Florentine doctor he consulted, as he said to me: —

"Such an illness as Sir George lays claim to is a matter of X-ray plates, and not of faith. Sir George has *not* got it. I am twenty years younger, and he may outlive me¹ by many years. He is an old man, but if he does not get pneumonia, he may live for twenty years."

When I returned from Florence to Montegufoni, I found my father in bed, awaiting the end, and looking extremely melancholy.

"How long does he give me?" he gasped out.

"Another ten to twenty years," I replied.

This cheered him up. And usually his fears — or at any rate the same fears — did not last long. He had too much to do, and he could not combine a perpetual deathbed scene with giving orders to the workmen and countermanding them.

In the winter of 1937 I went out to Montegufoni to warn my father that in my opinion Italy would before long be involved in war with Great Britain. For my trouble, however, I was dismissed with an outsize flea in my ear. "There won't be a war!" he maintained with an air of omniscient finality. I countered this, for I was worried about what might happen to him, by saying: —

"All right, there won't be one, then — but if one *was* to occur what would you do?"

In the manner of Robin Hood, he replied, "I should take refuge in the mountains!"

The same kind of life he had always led was continuing at the Castle. He was still at work, entering notes, writing long books, tracing pedigrees. I do not think he was lonely, his time was more than fully occupied, and as Henry once remarked, "Sir George always liked to know where people *were*, and now he knows they're all in the cemetery." None of

¹ He did.

them now could contradict him, or interfere with his plans. He was undisputed lord of his own territory in space, time, and imagination. He thought what he wished to think: and as a small instance of this I remember his remarking to me suddenly, "Edith made a great mistake by not going in for lawn tennis." He had grown more than formerly to *like* seeing people — yet he still seldom knew who they were. Sometimes he gave large luncheon parties (I always wondered on what principle he gathered the guests, and how it was arranged), and when I was staying with him, he would preside at a table in the vaulted dining room, while I would be in charge of a smaller table in the hall beyond. And I recollect being struck by the pathos and symbolism of a remark he made to me one afternoon, after the guests had gone. "I don't know how it is, but always it seems to me that I hear more laughter in the next room."

In August, 1939, my father went on a visit to England, but hurried back towards the end of the month to the Continent. As soon as he arrived in Italy, he set to, and began to renovate the stucco statues of gods and goddesses and peasants in the seventeenth-century grotto, the finest in Tuscany. The domed and painted ceiling had become so fouled by weather and so obscured by dirt that mythological personages and symbolic emblems portrayed upon it were unrecognizable: now, however, with washing and a little judicious aid from an expert in this line of work, they had become clearly identifiable. In his enthusiasm at these results my father wrote me a letter of, in a sense so abrupt, and certainly to prying eyes, so mysterious a kind that it was not delivered for a full two months: during which period, no doubt, the officials of the English Censorship, their gaze then directed towards the Mediterranean nations, were busily trying to interpret the cryptic message they were sure it must contain.

DEAREST OSBERT,

The figure of Athens, under the Crown, is now clearly visible rising from sea, at the moment when Aurora's chariot is topping the horizon. She gazes in the direction of Rome, behind whom are to be distinguished the figures of Mars, the God of War, and Neptune, who governs shipping. Egypt, in the guise of a priest, looks on in dismay, wondering what her fate may be. And, in the right corner is an owl, the attribute of both Athenae and Minerva.

Ever, dear boy,

Yr affectionate father,

GEORGE R. SITWELL

After this, for many months, the letters which arrived for me from my father were stained with acid, and had plainly been subjected to a thousand tests of one sort and another. It looked to me as if the Italian authorities were also on the track, for out of one letter fell a scrap of paper, with *niente* scrawled on it in pencil.

43

IT is difficult to know the end of the world when you reach it, as difficult as to sound the depths of Hell's all-consuming fires, illimitable and unconfined. There are no signposts to tell you where you are. The sky is still there, the light shines down, from heights canopied or azure. In the shapes of the clouds, in their groupings and shiftings, you can still read visions of fortune as easily as of disaster. You think in the same way. Moreover there is the cruel physical, or animal, persistence. You sleep and eat — eat with the same movements of jaws and hands. Nothing comparable to the collapse of the West, which we are witnessing, has happened since the fall of Constantinople to the Turks: and even then, the shock was not so great, because the inhabitants of the great maritime city, though for so long masters of the world, had not called in Science to give them an assurance of infallibility; they too, however, those of them who survived to see the next day, were by habit and necessity compelled to eat and sleep, and in time to work.

Since I began to write this autobiography, in 1940, the world has again changed out of recognition. Some dangers have disappeared, and others, if possible more stupendous, have tumbled into their places. To disregard for a moment — before returning to it — the future, in the last few years, tens of millions of human beings have perished in circumstances of execrable torture, by the ragings of war, the wastings of peace, the malice of man. For this, the actions of no person or group of persons are solely to be impugned. No one can read the chart of the future, even if it exists. However, it is permissible to blame the selfishness of those who lived in upholstered towers constructed to last only until their death. To these, my father, of whose tower I have so often written, had never belonged: the materials he had used were of fine quality, and its design was individual, fantastic but complete. Moreover the future — as he saw it — was ever in his mind, and the edifice was dedicated to it, to house countless impersonal generations, armies of descendants.

No: I refer to those who mouthed in first-class railway carriages the comfortable Edwardian slogan "It will last my time!" or the equivalent, in trams and buses, "Why worry?" For myself, I had never expected the world I knew to endure, and this, perhaps, gave a sharper edge to my vision, to my living. From my earliest youth, I had, I believe, an unusual sense of time, of the recession of the present into the past, and its emergence into the future.

We cannot peer across at the future, though its people can gaze at us with a cool and detached curiosity from across the chasm. But it is well that we are thus curbed, since it is unlikely that we should either see much that would please us or hear much good of ourselves. (Indeed the living, even the most

trivial and unworthy, always extend a patronage to the dead, however famous.) Even if we could foresee the events of a few years, we should not, I believe, add to our contentment. It was happy for my father that he did not understand the state of affairs in June, 1940, for it was already a time of calamity.

My father often in years past had pointed out the error in my literary outlook. I was pessimistic, he said. A book should always have a happy ending. Tragic things, he was glad to say, seldom happened in real life. Yet, had he now been gifted with the power of prognostication, what a vista of miseries, individual no less than terrestrial, would have been disclosed to him! A man of eighty must know that Death is not far away in the wings, is already hovering for his cue: but my father would have seen, as well as his own end in Switzerland, some three years ahead, in utter isolation, in a house in which he could see no one, and send and receive no letters, the ruin of all he had planned for, through the vicious cupidity and deceit of those who pretended to serve him; a result that had come to pass because of his own continually increasing blindness to character.

An omniscient being, again, posed high in a refuge on the mountains and looking out from it, would, if well disposed towards humanity, have perceived little that could gratify him. The second installment of the atrocious cataclysms of the twentieth century, which no statesman, and only one writer of genius, Flaubert, had foreseen, were on the point of being realized, would soon reach a new culmination. Gifted with an eagle's vision, he would, on the same day of June, have perceived the prostrate body of Europe crawling with gray German armies like lice. Just over the border of the morrow, he would have seen France, for centuries the light of Europe, vanish for the space of four years, to emerge in a new guise, and beyond that, Italy, Mother of the West, crawl out from the wreckage with a broken spine.

When I wrote the introduction to the first volume of my autobiography, the bombing had already begun, but who could have guessed the ultimate harvest of fire? The Germans attacked London, and reaped their reward in cliffs of desolation, in angular mountains of rubble, taller and more obsolescent than the Aztec pyramids, which had been their great cities, and which now choke and encumber the survivors. The Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and paid for it with a gigantic totem pole of

smoke, surely fated, in the same fashion as the story of the Flood, to become a legend for savage men in the future. That monstrous shape rose over Hiroshima, a city which for an infinitesimal fraction of time glowed with such a light as man on earth had never seen; a light which, though in itself it was Western Man's final tribute to Darkness, seemed more potent than the radiance which had once attracted the Three Kings to the Manger, and, indeed, its shadow still lies over the future of the world. But what the price may be that will one day be extracted from the whole of humanity for that devil's picnic in the flower-sprinkled isles, we can still as yet only comprehend at times in the dumb and sable corners of consciousness, where a knowledge of the future and a terrible awareness of justice abide.

I stare out the window, trying to conjure up the metropolises of the future, when men have once more crept out of the ground into which they will have been forced. Once out of their burrows, again, they will build with renewed vigor and aspiration. As the reader knows, who has had patience to accompany me so far, I have indulged in sciomaney and the magic of clouds all my life, and I see vast cities, palaces and domes, spires and arches, rise and re-form, as the clouds tumble like children on the hills. Towards the apex of the sky are whole clusters now of gigantic towers, crowned with the sun, and through the vast thoroughfare of the firmament run rivers and torrents and cascades of light. On walls vast as hills, and undulating like the Great Wall of China (which once I saw), are set great images, gods or demi-gods, drenched in light, the reflection of times in which the states and cities were born.

Among the golden rush and swerving of the clouds, maned like horses, from the vaulted halls where sit in conclave the ancient philosophers, with their grave eyes, wide-open as those of statues, and with the white beards flowing in the spectral, polar winds, while they listen to music or ask questions of the past, I hear voices, reaching to me faintly. What was the world like, before it fell, they ask: was there great sorrow? . . . No, there was a peculiar sadness in the air, a feeling of hundreds of days leading up to this particular day, and every now and then the breath of a change to come as when the great airs of summer move under August trees: only that, and a surge of vanity in man. It is difficult to know the end of the world when you reach it.

(The End)



Books and Men



One of the most gifted critics and teachers of our day, HARRY LEVIN

is a Professor of English and Chairman of the Department of Comparative Literature at Harvard University. In earlier issues he has written for us on James Joyce and other moderns: this fresh evaluation of Marcel Proust will serve as an invitation to new readers and as the introduction to *The Letters of Marcel Proust*, Edited and Translated by Mina Curtiss, a volume which is to be published by Random House this winter.

MARCEL PROUST

by HARRY LEVIN

1

THE correlation between a writer's experience and his writing, which is seldom coincidental, was never less so than in the case of Marcel Proust. No novelist has made more exhaustive use of the first person singular, nor given his readers a more immediate impression of the world he knew. Yet we must not take his novel too literally. He expressly warned us against identifying its narrator with himself. Repeatedly, perhaps disclaiming too much, he assured his friends that there were no keys to his characters. Nonetheless some of the latter, not always the most admirable, have been claimed as likenesses by persons still living. Others who looked upon him as a social climber, by a stroke of Proustian irony, have survived to bask in the phosphorescent light he threw upon their society, and to brighten their memoirs with the luster of his acquaintance. Critics and fellow writers, revising their recollections, have bestowed upon him such posthumous awards as few contemporaries had foreseen. Literary gossip, overimpressed by the peculiarities of his subject matter, has elaborated around him a sinister legend.

The twenty-five years that separate us from Proust's lifetime have blurred distinctions between the man and his work. For the Vichy regime he was too Semitic and decadent; for the Resistance movement he was too supine and luxurious. His reputation continues to have its vicissitudes, and so does the problem of evaluating his achievement. This would not have surprised him, for his long apprenticeship in the arts had taught him that the greatest masters are hardest to recognize, that true originality must build up its own tradition. His unique insight into character was founded on the observation that a single face can wear a hundred masks, that personality is reducible to a discontinuous series of psychological states. Thus the portrait painted by his friend, Jacques-Emile Blanche, highlights the preciousness of Proust as a young man. How different from the family album, or those

later snapshots which resemble Charlie Chaplin at his world-weariest! Or that deathbed photograph where the beard has grown and the nose — like Swann's at the last — has achieved sudden prominence, where the esthete is eclipsed by the prophet!

The "I" that speaks in *Remembrance of Things Past* is the spokesman for all these figures and many others. An introspective author has so many selves that autobiography can hardly comprehend them; fiction may bring him closer to the truth, as the autobiographer Gide was compelled to admit. But the novelist Proust, even while working out the implications of Gide's remark, adds a corollary which he might have derived from Montaigne: no one has firsthand knowledge of any self beyond his own. When, after several volumes, the heroine disappears, what do we know about her? What does the narrator? What does Proust leave us with? Nothing, except a tissue of conflicting testimonies and subjective memories. We are surrounded, as it were, by a metaphysical abyss which is only crossed when he puts himself in the place of his objective characters. It is Proust who plays the man about town in Swann, the man of letters in Bergotte, the Jew in Bloch, the homosexual in Charlus.

A gifted mimic, he naturally caught the inflections he heard most often, just as he registered sensations he had felt and recollected vistas he had seen. He lived his book in a double sense: his life provided the substance for his work, his work the justification for his life. So organically were they bound together that we cannot imagine him finishing *Remembrance of Things Past* and undertaking another project. Every great writer, according to James Joyce, has one book in him; and if he ever finishes it, he merely rewrites it, one way or another. Had Proust lived longer, he would doubtless have gone on rewriting and amplifying his manuscript until the deferred point of death. Since it was, among other things, an inquiry into the nature of reality, we must not be too categorical in dis-

tinguishing what is true from what is fictive. If we would understand the process of refinement that fitted his biographical circumstances to his artistic intentions, we must turn to his letters.

On a first consecutive reading, they may seem to conceal rather more than they reveal, like so much of the correspondence of Henry James. They sustain the high pitch of effusiveness, the mannered tone of formality, that Proust's friends characterized by inventing a verb: "to Proustify." Significantly, he cautioned one of them against showing a letter to another because, he said, "It's too honest to be sincere." This was no paradox; for though, by consistent devotion to an exacting set of ideals, he attained the higher virtue of honesty, more often than not he missed that simple, direct relationship which constitutes sincerity. In his lifelong quest for friendship, he ranged from morbid sensitivity to misplaced generosity. But between his nervous queries to early schoolmates, and his gracious responses to latter-day admirers, the development is profound. To trace it is to traverse the distance from self-consciousness to self-knowledge, to commence with the self and widen the exploration.

2

BORN in the "terrible year," 1871, he was an exact contemporary of the Third Republic. His father, one of its solid citizens, was professor of public health at the medical school of the University of Paris. Vacations spent with paternal relatives, at Illiers near Chartres in the heart of France, are recorded in Proust's memorable sketches of Combray. The two walks around the village, to which he gave the names of Méséglise and Guermantes, set for his childhood the social pattern of his adult experience: the divergence between the bourgeois and the aristocratic ways of living. Like Flaubert and Dostoevsky, Proust was not only the son of a doctor, he was also a congenital patient, thereby fulfilling the trend of modern novelists toward a clinical approach and a pathological situation. Though his peculiar symptoms have never been satisfactorily diagnosed, his movements were gradually hemmed in by an invisible network of allergies.

Sickliness reinforced his strongest emotional tie, his dependence upon his mother. It was she, the daughter of a prosperous and cultivated Jewish family, who awakened his fondness for literature and the arts. The introductory episode of his novel, where her good-night kiss is delayed by the visit of M. Swann, and the agony of the child is not soothed until she consents to read through the night at his bedside, establishes a psychological pattern: infantile caprice, parental indulgence, "abdication of the will." Yet, despite the intimation that his would not be a normal existence, Proust did most of the things expected from a young intellectual of the upper middle class. He attended

the University, volunteered for military service, contributed to little magazines and literary journals, and even took part in a duel. He studied law and dallied with diplomacy; he was invited to numerous salons and appointed to a sinecure in the Mazarine Library. When he published a precocious collection of sketches, he entitled it *Pleasures and Days*. Hesiod's title had been *Works and Days*.

If the substitution of pleasure for work betrays the spoiled child, the emphasis on the calendar foreshadows the mature Proust. Meanwhile from the lectures of Bergson, a distant connection, he learned that the individual is related to time through memory. From the books of Ruskin, two of which he translated, he learned how the present is related to the past through art. Everything encouraged him to regard himself as heir of the ages. Neither fabulously wealthy nor desperately ill, he was just rich and sick enough to lead the pampered life of a *rentier* and a valetudinarian. In the leisure thus afforded, he visited cathedrals and traveled to Italy. For the *Figaro* he chronicled fashionable gatherings and parodied other writers. At the verge of thirty-five it must have seemed that he was making a career of dilettantism. Then, two years after his father's death, he realized the idea of misery that he had once noted in a children's questionnaire: "to be separated from Mamma."

Between the actual event and the realization, according to Proust, there is a kind of intermission: his protracted infancy was succeeded by a long-drawn-out "puberty of grief." Retrospectively he wrote that no mistress had ever replaced his mother, that nothing was disinterested except maternal love. Reliving his loss by describing the death of the grandmother, his narrator concludes that "each of us is really alone." But solitude was the precondition of his final effort. To consummate it in his remaining seventeen years, he shut himself into a narrowing sequence of bedchambers, apartments, sanatoria, substitutes for the womb. Weeping and smiling across his mother's deathbed — this is the haunting attitude in which he is best remembered by one of his closest friends, the musician Reynaldo Hahn. Proust's own analogy was Noah's ark, where he lay in secluded comfort while storms raged outside, with his mother playing the benevolent dove and maintaining touch with the world. Freed from the world's engagements, he believed he could view it more clearly, could keep the engagement he had made with himself.

The cork-lined room in which he immured himself has come to stand for the ultimate in isolation, the last hermetic compartment of the proverbial ivory tower. It happens that other writers have had such rooms, notably Henry Bernstein the boulevard playwright, whom nobody accuses of being a recluse. What is so extraordinary about Proust is the intelligence that had to be cushioned, cribbed, confined. If his suffocations were personal appeals

for help, his fumigations purified the general atmosphere. Yet where could he, so carefully insulated, feel the pinches that tormented other men? Not so much in his own poor health as in the indifference of the healthy, in the chronic invalid's complaint that no one sympathizes with his sufferings. The storybook princess deserting her moribund lover, the elder Swann unable to grieve for his wife, the doctor putting his decoration ahead of his patient, the Guermantes ignoring Swann's illness and proceeding to their ball — each case presents a sensitive perception of human insensitivity. The plea for sympathy becomes an attack on callousness. The ego repudiates egoism.

3

PROUST liked to look for the figure in the carpet, the characteristic note of other novelists. In Stendhal — he pointed out — it was altitude, in Hardy it was landscape, in Dostoevsky it was crime. In his own novel, we may suggest, it is nonrecognition: the failure of his worldly characters to recognize the claims of human decency, the cut that the narrator meets from his best friend, Saint-Loup. This is a negative criterion, based upon values whose absence is profoundly felt, but attached to a mode of existence which expects very little to happen. Circumstance and temperament cast Proust in the role of the passive spectator, watching the bathers romp along the beach at 'Balbec.' Like the seascapes mirrored in the glass-doored bookcases of his room at the Grand Hotel, reality seems to be several removes away. But here the original patterns of Combray are repeated: the near-by watering-places of Rivebelle and Marcouville are socially as far apart as Méséglise and Guermantes. And the narrator is still in the same predicament, though the grandmother has psychologically replaced the mother.

Back in the city it is not so easy to shut out the world; with an acute ear Proust renders the street-cries of Paris. His guarded regimen could not make him invulnerable. His gentle disposition could be aroused by urgent moral issues impinging upon him: the conflict of his epoch, the conflict with himself. Each of these conflicts resolved a tragic situation which would otherwise have lacked recognition-scenes, and the recognitions were accompanied — in the best Aristotelian tradition — by reversals. On the social plane, the problem was anti-Semitism, which came to a climax for Proust's generation with the Dreyfus case. In the psychological sphere, the subject was homosexuality, to which he gave the frankest and fullest treatment that literature had yet attempted. The first theme enabled him to reveal the rift that was opening under the two classes he had described. The second supplied a psychophysical parallel for the isolated condition that he was approaching. In both in-

stances, he no longer excluded society; he was in the position of a man whom society might exclude.

Society, in the exclusive sense of the term, accepted Proust at the ironic moment when it was called upon to side with the military and clerical forces that supported the condemnation of Captain Dreyfus. Proust had not been brought up to consider himself a Jew; indeed he had some degree of exposure to Catholicism; but the anti-Semitic bias that now affected the circles in which he moved, though it might have spared him, touched a tenderer object — his mother. His tact and friendship, his regard for tradition, his disinclination for politics, were overpowered by the sense of justice that propelled him into the single public sally of his career. He prided himself on being "the first Dreyfusard," and did not relax his concern until the twelve-year judicial error had been rectified. Though the motives of the Verdurins are no loftier than those of the Guermantes, Dreyfusism is the political touchstone of his novel. It brings home to Swann the artificiality of the standards by which he has lived, and sweeps him back from the realm of manners into the realm of morals.

At this point, with an almost Biblical exordium, the novel shifts from racial to sexual themes. Maladjustment is linked to neurosis, for Proust, by the pressure of ostracism, which engenders both ghettos and underworlds. Where the one provided a means of evaluation, the other is used to devalue his characters, pointing the searchlight of suspicion at each in his turn. Unlike Gide, Proust is no apologist for inversion; if he speaks from experience, the experience has been bitter. Furthermore, as he keenly appreciates, the most poignant aspect of the homosexual's plight is that — to the normal person — it must seem slightly comic. Proust's awareness of this hopeless contradiction is magnificently embodied in his seriocomic characterization of the Baron de Charlus. The underlying scruple, as always, was an outraged sense of family integrity. Others had observed that dominant mothers often had effeminate sons — or that Lesbian daughters had fathers like M. Vinteuil. What is characteristically Proustian, what is hinted in the self-reproach of his sketches and notebooks, is the mood of guilt that he calls "the profanation of the Mother."

Scandal and scholarship have combined to allege that his heroine was a man. For Albertine, they tell us, we must read Alfred Agostinelli; we must remember the erstwhile chauffeur, afterward secretary, who was killed in an accident learning to fly a plane. Proust has explicitly paid his tribute to Agostinelli, and there are moving pages on which Albertine is associated with the imagery of automobiles and airplanes. To transpose her sex, however, raises more difficulties than it explains. Proust's letters give ample evidence of his extreme susceptibility to feminine charm — and, what is more, of the continued interest that many charming

women took in him. The particular relationship that he analyzes, which is triangular, opposes the claims of homosexual and heterosexual love. If Albertine eludes the narrator, it is because he has cloistered her even more jealously than himself. Like Swann, who is never so much the art collector as in his love affairs, he strives to possess her as absolutely as the gowns and gifts he buys for her. In the end it is he who remains the prisoner.

4

SINCE *Remembrance of Things Past* is the fruit of Proust's experience, if not the experience itself, we may draw the drastic inference that he found no satisfaction in love. The mixed emotions and cross-purposes of the individual, who can neither forget his own individuality nor accept that of another, confirmed the realization of loneliness to which his mother left him. While pleasures can be shared gregariously, sufferings must be endured alone; hence the isolation of tragedy. Comedy, on the other hand, habitually assumes the social view. Alternating between these dramatic attitudes, Proust constructed a series of climactic scenes; whereas the note on which his novel opens and closes is personal, poetic, philosophic. Thus the book seems, like its author, to move out into the world and to withdraw again. Meanwhile the Dreyfus affair had helped him to perceive the limitations of the little group that considered itself *le monde* — to understand society in its more fundamental significance. The growth of his knowledge kept pace with the elaboration of his work.

The more we learn about the actual process of composition, the more evident it becomes that his novel was the labor of a lifetime. As early as 1896, when his first book came out, he began to mention a second. By another decade the scope of this undertaking had increased to the point where, in his correspondence, he invoked the *Iliad*. Less magniloquently, he compared his own efforts to the futile researches of Mr. Casaubon in one of his favorite novels, George Eliot's *Middlemarch*. It may well be that the death of Proust's mother provided the long-postponed occasion to carry through his work-in-progress. But by that year, 1905, he must already have set down a rich accumulation of notes. His surviving notebooks have been entrusted to André Maurois, who has recently dropped a few tantalizing hints. Something of the original conception, it would appear, has survived in the episode of "Swann in Love." Swann was to be the protagonist, Odette then bore the romantic name of Carmen, and their story was impersonally told.

The circumstances whereby the novel achieved its present form are Proustian in their ironic complexity. The complete version was never published; the published version was never completed. When *Swann's Way* was published in 1913, two

subsequent volumes would have completed the series, which was to comprise about 1500 pages. The First World War, suspending their scheduled publication, gave Proust a chance to revise and augment his material. To his projected second volume he added a third, fourth, and fifth. While he was working on the sixth he died. Fortunately the last, *The Past Recaptured*, existed in his earlier manuscript. It became the seventh volume of a sequence now augmented by some 2500 pages. In qualitative terms, this meant that the work was an organism which grew and changed with Proust, continually reconsidering ideas and characters, gradually overtaken by afterthoughts and new preoccupations, finally responding to the impact of the war itself. The total effect, as Professor Feuillerat has shown, was to darken the picture.

Proust had proceeded, he explained, "in reverse order, starting from beliefs and illusions, and correcting them little by little, as Dostoevsky would tell the story of a life." His starting-point was the magic of glamorous names, faraway places, historic associations. Reproached for being a snob, he equivocally replied that he numbered chauffeurs and valets among his friends, as well as dukes and princes. He might have answered, with Henry James, that he was haunted by "the poetry of something sensibly gone." If he had started by "Proustifying," he ended — to echo his expression — by "depoetizing." He built up his hierarchies in order to tear them down. Twisting the psychological kaleidoscope, he confounded the social pattern; outgrowing "the age of words," he entered "the age of things." Protected by the coloration of snobbery, he ascended the Guermantes' way. The farther he penetrated, the deeper his disillusionment and the purer his nostalgia. The former is dramatically symbolized by the red slippers of the Duchess. The latter is awakened by the stroke that overcomes the narrator's grandmother.

As the narrative moves from its lyrical to its satirical phase, the author disengages himself. His detachment is so sharp that he seems at times to be eavesdropping upon his material. Instead of looking out from the inside, he peers in from the outside, like those fishermen of Balbec to whom the hotel is an aquarium and the summer people are exotic fish. Such had been his ornamental existence. Laure Hayman, herself the ornament of the Bois de Boulogne, had referred to him as her Dresden figurine. Robert de Montesquiou, his "professor of beauty," had treated "the little Marcel" as a promising disciple. But taste was not enough, as he reminded his English correspondent, Marie Nordlinger; even Ruskin had mistaken esthetics for ethics. To play the dilettante was to condemn one's self, like Swann, to ultimate frustration. Satisfaction lay, not in passively collecting, but in actively creating, works of art. If the two ways had proved equally barren there was still a third, which followed the

music of Vinteuil toward "a forgotten country," which offered Proust "the keys to a hidden reality."

These, of course, are metaphors; but it is metaphor which conveys a fresh impression of a familiar subject, as the painting of Elstir is said to do. It is metaphor, Proust declares in his article on Flaubert, which makes for literary immortality. His own metaphorical style is the positive affirmation of a Platonic ideal, as well as a criterion for judging the superficial values of mundane reality. Art for him is the last judgment, the absolute in a welter of relativism, the one immovable object that stands against the irresistible force of time. A Bergsonian rhythm of change and flux and mutability pulsates through *Remembrance of Things Past*, but out of it rises a Ruskinian conception: the patient, architectonic, perduring image of a cathedral. Scott-Moncrieff's English title, though it echoes Shakespeare, mistranslates Proust; "making up for time lost" would come closer to the purport of *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu*. That search — or research — had begun in boyhood, when Proust wrote his father that everything else except literature and philosophy was a "wasted time."

Years and distractions and disillusionments, intervening between his intention and his accomplishment, accelerated the sense of urgency and strengthened the will to create. In the disinterested compunctions of artists, if nowhere else, Proust encountered a moral equivalent for the thankless sacrifices of parents. If we assume that his man of letters is modeled upon his earliest mentor, Anatole France, we may agree that Bergotte is merely "a flute-player." Yet Proust himself, whose developing stature was recognized by the Goncourt Prize in 1919, posed for the final portrait. We know that he was on his own deathbed, in 1922, when he completed his account of Bergotte's fatal pangs. Like his character, he had attended an exhibition of Dutch paintings, and had paused at length before Vermeer's "View of Delft." His fascination with this picture, like his Ruskin-inspired pilgrimage to Venice, is significant; for both perspectives exhibit the culture of cities at its richest and ripest. His prophetic horizon, which extends so far backward to Sodom and Gomorrah, culminates in the Wagnerian spectacle of Paris during an air-raid.

In contrast to the youthful innocence of his landscapes and seascapes, the city is the grim habitation of experience. The Duchesse de Guermantes, once the *chatelaine* of a remotely feudal household, becomes the occupant of the neighboring apartment. If any artistic medium has been uniquely expressive of bourgeois Europe, it has been the novel; hence the decadence of the society that Proust chronicles is expressed by the overripeness of his form. Those who confuse form with content make him the scape-

goat for the sins he bitterly denounced. They held him responsible for the collapse of an epoch against which he cried out in the wilderness. André Gide, too, cited the Old Testament; but, crossing Proust midway, he moved in the opposite direction — from austerity to availability. The charge of time-serving might more justifiably be leveled at him. Not that Gide's periodic enthusiasms were really insincere; perhaps he is too sincere to be, by Proust's definition, completely honest. Timelessness rather than timeliness was the essence that Proust discovered in his particular cup of tea.

The tragedy was that, aside from the arts, man had no defense against the ravages of time. The processes of aging, *vieillesse*, have never been more painstakingly or painfully registered. One of Proust's discoveries was that people tend to grow old suddenly rather than gradually. The last reception of the Princesse de Guermantes, formerly Madame Verdurin, can only be compared with Swift's terrible picture of the Struldbrugs in *Gulliver's Travels*. The news that a casual acquaintance had killed his mother in a fit of insanity shocked Proust into writing a powerful essay, "Filial Sentiments of a Parricide." The deaths of those we love are as criminal and catastrophic, he argued, as the great domestic tragedies from *Ædipus* to the Russians; every son must accuse himself of hastening the advance of his parent's old age. The elements of pleasure and suffering are so mixed that callous souls may live from day to day without recognizing the evils that encompass their fellow men. But between the joy of living and the tragic vision, Proust concluded by asking, which is the truth?

His answer is suggested in a remarkable letter on the rehabilitation of Alfred Dreyfus. For once it appeared that truth had caught up with fiction. Since the case against Dreyfus was fictitious, his grievance could be resolved in a happy ending. But the griefs that beset most men, not excluding Proust, were unhappily true. All too seldom could life, like a novel, dispense poetic justice. In George Sand virtue may triumph, in Balzac vice; in Proust the same event is subject to both interpretations. When *Remembrance of Things Past* is unlike other novels, it is more like life, which is neither an idyl nor an intrigue but both. No novelist seems more intimately conscious of the way things happen: the combinations of chance, the configurations of motive. Art must base its findings on facilities for observation which perforce are limited — and which, with Proust, were rarefied and specialized beyond the norm. But since he was both the observer and the observed, these conditions heightened the intensity of his introspection to the point where his own self-knowledge helps others to know themselves.



Books and Men



An art critic and director who received his training at the Fogg Art Museum at

Harvard, JAMES S. PLAUT resumed his duties as Director of the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, after four years' service in the Navy. As Director of the Art Looting Investigation Unit, OSS, he was responsible for uncovering the works of art collected by Rosenberg, Göring, and Hitler and hidden in Germany.

"THE TASTE OF ANGELS"

by JAMES S. PLAUT

I

FRANCIS HENRY TAYLOR, who became a museum director in his twenties and hurtled in ten years to the pinnacle of his profession, is the *enfant terrible* no less than the golden boy of the American art world. On being made Director of the Metropolitan Museum in 1941, he accepted stewardship of our greatest storehouse of cultural material at the moment of our greatest national crisis. Assuming the weighty responsibility for the physical preservation of vast treasure, he has also had occasion to ponder the true place of our museums in the public domain. His conclusions, as published and openly expressed, have not always been palatable to the rank and file of his colleagues. In *Babel's Tower: The Dilemma of the Modern Museum* (Columbia University Press, 1945) he berated the art historians (a genus of scholar peculiar to our century) for their aridity in research and their preoccupation with the inconsequential trappings of learning.

Taylor has always had a healthy anxiety about cut-and-dried academic procedures. As an undergraduate he was something of a renegade, and took time off from Pennsylvania to have a fling at teaching English in a French *lycée*. His advanced studies were decidedly exploratory; in three years he ran the gamut of the Sorbonne, Florence, Barcelona, and the American Academy at Rome, and for a time medicine or finance seemed likely to claim him. (He came by these tendencies honestly, for his father was a prominent Philadelphia physician and his mother a Newbold, of the banking family.) At twenty-five, presumably with some sense of compromise, he was installed as Curator of Medieval Art at the Philadelphia Museum and three years later became the Director of the Worcester Art Museum.

Intellectually an ardent Francophile, he prefers the intuitive weaving of Gallic criticism to ponderous German metaphysics. A humanist, he finds the guessing game of "attribution," so popular among the art scholars, tedious and smug. As a realist, he

delights in throwing frequent barbs at the cultists of abstraction and surrealism. On the whole, his reputation has been secured through activation rather than contemplation.

He has, to be sure, a cordial dislike for the strenuous outdoor life, finding his exercise in the written word, the conversational skirmish, and the sharp anecdote. Some years ago he turned a phrase nicely expressive of his own outlook, something to the effect that "the only thing I hate more than sports is the people who like them," and he has badgered his friends with it ever since at the slightest provocation.

Mistrusted and misunderstood by those who conceive of a museum director as an artist or at least "artistic," he has been an able, aggressive administrator, somewhat in the manner of a college president or competent government official. A strong flair for figures is said (perhaps apocryphally) to have prompted one of the Metropolitan's senior trustees to observe that he wished "Taylor would act more like a museum director and less like a banker."

No matter how atypical, there is nothing inconsistent in Francis Taylor's preoccupation with money, for it is common knowledge (and common sense) that the economic survival of our free institutions is a matter of grave concern to those who are responsible for them. And it is possible that an early realization that art has always been the handmaiden of money inspired him to embark, twelve years ago, on the writing of the first history, in the English language, of art collecting. His ambitious undertaking has now crystallized, with the publication of *The Taste of Angels: A History of Art Collecting from Rameses to Napoleon* (Atlantic-Little, Brown, \$10). This is a monumental work in itself, but Mr. Taylor is already at work on Volume II of the history, which "will deal with European collectors of the Industrial Revolution and the rise of collecting in America." He has also expressed privately the disarming thought that the third and

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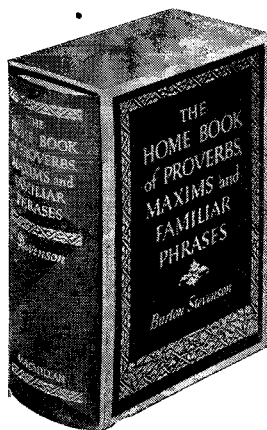
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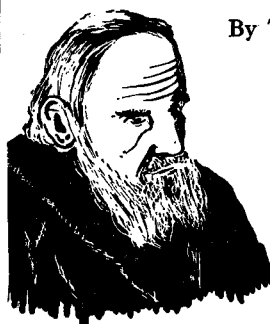
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last volume (which one surmises will have to do with collectors and collections in our time) must await posthumous publication.

In a notice to the reader, Mr. Taylor supplies a key to his text. "Spengler and Toynbee, to name but two," he writes, "have recognized the interplay between social history and the rise and fall of capital. Money has suddenly seemed to come into its own in the academic world. But the history and criticism of art have been curiously exempted from the impact of economics and the social sciences. Writers and teachers of the humanities have been content to abide by time-worn conclusions and formulae."

"Collections," he continues, "are the tangible illustrations to the ordinary processes of economic history and show the trends of historic taste. . . . What I am suggesting is that the economy of each nation will shed a revealing light upon the direction of its national taste and artistic styles."

2

The Taste of Angels is, as I have said, a monumental work. It runs to six hundred pages divided into ten "books": on the early collections, from the ancients through the Middle Ages; the Italian Renaissance; the Hapsburgs; France, England, and the Netherlands in the sixteenth century; Spain and the Low Countries in the seventeenth century; Baroque Rome; France from Louis XIV to the Revolution; England from the Georgians to Waterloo; the German courts of the eighteenth century; and the Napoleonic age.

There are chapters on the great personages and the stirring episodes of collecting. Mr. Taylor inquires into the instincts and motives of a galaxy of *amateurs*, and peers attentively into their purses and politics. The parade is impressive: the Medici of Florence and the Fuggers of Augsburg; the collector-popes Paul II, Julius II, and Leo X; the royal collectors Philip II of Hapsburg, Charles I, and Francis I; Isabella d'Este, Christina of Sweden, and Madame de Pompadour; Richelieu and Mazarin, Buckingham, Arundel, and Walpole.

Intriguing passages are devoted to the curious phenomena of collecting, such as the German *Wunderkammer* of the sixteenth century, that fabulous catchall for a vast and odd assortment of objects — illustrated books, astronomical instruments, perfume bottles, games and clocks, and an infinite miscellany of fossils, bird's eggs, and natural relics.

"To the Teutonic mind," writes Mr. Taylor, "it seemed that the work of art was important only for the value of the materials . . . or because it represented some phase of cosmic curiosity."

He re-creates the artistic climate of the great courts and capitals in authoritative detail and with ingratiating insight. Of Spain under Philip II he writes: —

The continued wars of Charles V and of his son had impoverished not only the court but the nobility of most of Europe. The new middle-class millionaire or profiteer offered a ready market to the princes who had inherited over several generations the cream of the artistic production of the Renaissance. Moreover, the inflation of credit during the first half of the sixteenth century, through the operations of the free Bourse at Antwerp, demanded new and more mobile collateral than the cumbersome and obsolete mortgages on real property then current. Quite suddenly the third and fourth generations of Renaissance patrons found themselves obliged to put a value on the pictures and other objects of art which they had inherited and to sell them as dearly as possible to replenish the family fortunes.

Thus it is safe to say that modern collecting as we know it today dates from the crash in 1557 which followed the frenzied stock market boom of the mid-century. For the first time since the days of ancient Rome do we see in operation the law that high prices are paid for works of art in inflationary periods and collections are liquidated in deflationary periods. Spain under Philip II had reached the point at which the United States has now arrived — of having cornered the gold supply of the earth. But then, since navigation was too primitive to reship it to America and put it back in the mine (for the idea of burying gold and forgetting it at Fort Knox had not yet been thought of), there was nothing to do with it but plaster it on the altars of churches and upon the screens and ceilings of private chapels. It is not by chance that the style of architecture of Spain and Portugal in the later sixteenth century derived its name of *plateresque* from *plata*, the Spanish word for plate.

Of the French court at the end of the *Grand Siècle*: —

The court, accustomed to spending the better part of the year in small attic rooms at Versailles, dancing attendance on the king, transplanted this life of small apartments to Paris. The great *hôtels particuliers* gave way to a new kind of *immeuble*, the large apartment house of the *faubourg*. The scale of life of the nobility was very much reduced. Formal living took on another aspect which required a new type of decoration; the *bibelôt* came into its own and, as the old aristocracy gradually were obliged to sell the major works of art acquired by their ancestors, a vogue was established for the lighter and less pompous styles of the later Louis.

But it was the economic disaster caused in 1720 by the bursting of John Law's "Bubble" which more than any other factor set the seal upon French fashion. For in this speculative orgy virtually the entire court was ruined. Once more the nobility were forced to sell their works of art abroad and when, at last, under the reckless encouragement of Madame de Pompadour, they again turned to the pleasures of collecting, it was to the frivolous productions of their contemporaries rather than to the pompous old masters so highly prized by their parents and grandparents. The furniture of the *ébéniste* and *ciseleur*, the *bric-à-brac*, the porcelain decorations from the monopolistic factories of the crown, took the place of the more

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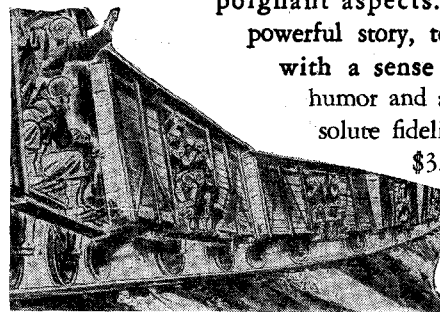
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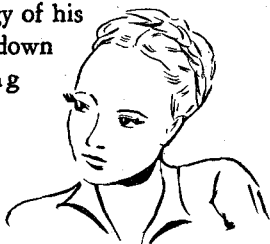
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solid financial investments of Renaissance art; it was so to speak an inflation of the paper currency of art against an ever-thinning gold reserve.

And, with singular lightness of touch, this passage on the art trade of Imperial Rome: —

A whole quarter of Rome in the vicinity of the Villa Publica was devoted to art dealers, booksellers and antiquarians — a quarter which was rife with the time-honored practices of falsification and forgery, of “phony” restorations and rigged auction sales. All of the practices of Fifty-seventh Street, for better or worse, appear in the writings of the satirists. Suetonius describes a scene in a Roman auction room which in the days of Mr. Hearst might have had its counterpart in New York. The Emperor Caligula, who was constantly in need of money, announced a sale of the spurious objects of his collection in which he himself would act as auctioneer. All of the members of his court were invited to be present and were obliged to buy well beyond the reserve price. One poor courtier fell asleep and Caligula thereupon called the attention of the Barker to the fact that every time the man nodded in his sleep he raised his bid. When he awoke he had acquired some \$5,000,-000 worth of trash from the Emperor’s collection.

The final chapters, on the Napoleonic conquest, are a vivid evocation of the grand prototype for Nazi looting as we have recently known it. The appendices, which deal with the value of money and various subjects essential to the text, are hardly less provocative — for once — than the text itself. The book is happily designed, copiously and well illustrated.

In his foreword, Mr. Taylor warns that *The Taste of Angels* is “addressed neither to the art historian nor to the businessman, but to those who care for art and have a curiosity about those who likewise cared before them.” He apologizes for “inquiring into many divergent fields in which no single person can have universal competence.” The author thus recognizes the fundamental danger in the book’s concept and structure: that of attempting to reconcile and integrate the separate strains of history — social, political, economic, and artistic

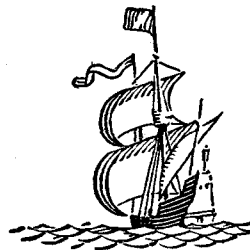
— which do not always fall conveniently into a rhythmic pattern of parallels. His history will probably not appease the specialist’s hunger. Essentially, what Mr. Taylor has given us is a chronicle — rather than an analysis — of taste. It might be argued that the Director of the Metropolitan should have indulged more liberally in aesthetic judgments, but this will not lessen the general reader’s appetite.

Mr. Taylor’s documentation is thorough and ordered. Upon a scholarly foundation he has superimposed a rewarding layer of lively history, written with a sure, human touch and with personal appreciation of the qualities and deeds of men who have prized art through the ages.

Occasionally his amiable interpretation of history reflects in astonishing degree his predilections as director of a great museum — his Latin orientation; his pragmatic sense of the inextricability of art from the complex web of human attainment (and his impatience with the contemporary separatists and mystics); his determination to make the lessons of art lucid and profitable to all who would look and listen. If this spells corruption, where is the historian who is less guilty?

The Taste of Angels is popular history in the best sense. It has a warm message for the patron of princely aspirations and for the modest young collector; for the reader of Defoe and Vasari, the student of Taine, Keynes, or Toynbee — in fact, for the many to whom the fabric of man’s progress remains endlessly fascinating.

“These works of art,” Mr. Taylor concludes, “have been preserved and handed on from one generation to the next because the ideas that lie behind them are, and have always been, considered vital to the abundant life. They are the very things which distinguish the adolescence of one nation from the intellectual maturity of another. . . . It remains for our generation to decide whether we shall guarantee the ebb and flow of these spiritual values, or, whether we, the temporary custodians, shall bear the responsibility of debasing the one remaining currency of civilized man.”



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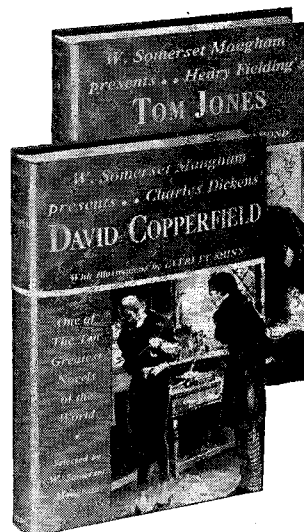
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THE *Peripatetic Reviewer*

BY
EDWARD
WEEKS

THE fever of games is very contagious in this country. I notice that those who were not cut out to be athletes in college sometimes have a delayed attack of competition in later life. But latent in most of us, especially those who are city bred, is the desire to know the country, — to identify ourselves with the streams, the mountains, and the sea, — and so in mid-life as the zest for tennis or golf plays itself out and subsides, we hear a new call, a call to do things in the open with our children — camping, fishing, cruising, hunting with guns or camera, the reaching out for unspoiled America and for shared experience which brings alive the antennae we had almost forgotten we possessed.

I had not realized this was happening to me until some years ago on a winter night an older man (he had just lost his only son of college age) and I were walking home toward Beacon Hill, talking of fishing as we breasted the snowstorm. I remarked unguardedly that I enjoyed fishing with young Ted. "Do it," he said, and I felt the emotion in his voice. "Do it every chance you get! You have him with you for so short a time."

The admonition comes back to me across the years; now that old Bob himself is dead, I know the urgency he felt: the war years, the insecurity, the military training ahead, have intensified the same desire in hundreds of thousands of other families, as I could see this summer from the cars heading north with canoe racks, trailers, dogs at the open window, and the youngsters piled in with the duffel in the back seat. The new Maine highway was one steady stream of family cars heading for the woods and the boats. Holiday and anticipation made the crowd good-natured.

Our log cabin faced north to the Blue Mountains, the Kennebago Range, and the almost three hundred miles of wilderness stretching between our lake and Quebec; off to the right was the mountain trail

taken by Benedict Arnold and his "rabble in arms" on that march Kenneth Roberts has depicted so magnificently; to the left the peak at the end of the lake had the fire ranger's lookout like a tiny saltcellar at its very tip. The green heights and valleys receding in the distance caught the sunset in different planes of light and shadow; the deep water off our float was glassy but dimpled where a fish rose, and from down the lake we heard the mockery of the loon. This was our first impression.

In the seven days that followed, dawn and dusk took on a new meaning and we napped after lunch to make up for the shortened night. Always on a fishing trip I find myself waking early to catch the coming of day: rising at five o'clock with the mist still on the water, then the single file through the fragrant wet evergreens with always the chance of surprising a deer, then the roar of the river and the breath-taking first sight of Canoe Pool and of a leaping fish — if you didn't disturb the water too much as you waded in.

The kingfishers blustered at us in our early exploration of the lake. Black duck and the golden-eye whistlers rose as our boat probed the lagoon of the Boneyard, where the great gray skeletons of the trees traced the forest that was, before the lumbermen cut and flooded the land. Sheer white against the spruce were a pair of egrets — the first, the natives told us, ever to venture this far north. The little sandpipers pecked and scurried along the sandy shore, and always we were on the lookout for those silent marauders, the hawks and the young eagle.

We fished as a family, our three rods always busy; and with Jim O'Brien, our guide and the best cook in Maine, we took as many meals as possible on the river and lake shore. I remember his trout chowder, — onions, thin-sliced potatoes, and a dozen of the little fellows, eight to ten inches, skinned, boned, and delectable as they were brewed in the milk. Trout chowder, toast, crisp bacon, blueberries, spice cake and coffee, and then a nap stretched out under the balsam. The pink-fleshed trout of the stream are a delicacy no restaurant provides. They were our staple and we topped them off with wild raspberries or blueberries which we gathered as Jim made the fire.

I know now better than ever before the restraint and rivalry, the teasing and the pride, which are all a part of family fishing. Young Ted of course would never leave the water alone. Casting from the float at the end of the first day he derricked in



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a 9½-incher (exact by tape measure) and then came running to report, "Boy, he sure would have made me work if I hadn't pulled him on the dock as I came through!" The timing of the remark was as perfect as his back cast.

We all learned from Jim, and Ted learned the most. The skill, the discipline so shrewdly conveyed in the boat and on the stream, the quiet teasing as when Jim took over the youngster's line, straightened out the snarls in the leader, made a single cast, hooked into a 2-pounder, turning the rod back to Ted with the remark, "Look what you had on your line, son, — why didn't you pull him up?"; the pride felt but unexpressed when the thirteen-year-old skunked us all by netting two salmon under his mentor's eye; the walk home under the moonlight, the boots clumping, and the note of triumph creeping into each individual's recital.

Good guides are quiet-spoken and the example is soothing to city nerves. There is plenty of exasperation in fishing, and when I had been fighting my dry fly in a perverse wind one hot afternoon, tangling the brown puff in my rod every third cast, it took a quiet remark of Jim's to blow my head of steam. "River's full of fish," he said, "and you'll get one if you rest the pool. Might even get that 6-pounder that's got so many hooks in him that they wanted him for the scrap drive."

Jim's gravity was forever fooling us: he spoke so seriously that we were never prepared. "Want to hear me call a moose?" he asked one noon as we were trudging towards home. We stopped. He scanned the horizon, fixed his eyes on a distant point, cupped his lips, took a prodigious breath, and said, "Here, moosey, moosey, moosey." Coming from a 230-pounder it knocked you flat.

Another time he had been telling us about the great forest fires of last year. "They were bad," he said, "real bad." A pause. "Did you hear about the herd of deer up here got caught with smoke and cinders in their eyes? Blinded. But there was one young buck who could see: he lined them up and led six of them across the river each holding on to the other's tail. But a guide crept up, cut the buck's tail, led the does into camp, and had himself enough deer meat to last all winter."

Salem and her ships

For a holiday I like a big leisurely historical novel with plenty of episode, the kind of book you read and keep thinking about in off moments. So I took with me to Maine the page proofs of *The Running of the Tide* (Houghton Mifflin, \$4.00), the Book-of-the-Month for October, and the winner of the \$150,000 MGM Award. The author, **Esther Forbes**, has New England blood in her veins, the Worcester Antiquarian Society at her back door, and the North Shore of Massachusetts for her imagination to build with. Salem and Boston were the capitals of her early narratives: *A Mirror for*

Witches was laid in the smaller port, and her Pulitzer Prize winning biography, *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In*, had the North End for its focal point. To her books Miss Forbes brings a deep and delving delight in the past, a feeling for the New England character by turns shrewd and romantic, and the pepper and salt of everyday living which she translates so accurately into another century.

The Running of the Tide is the story of Salem in the early 1800's when the ships bound out of the skimpy, silted harbor (no vessel larger than four hundred tons could get into it), in their trade with Russia, the West Indies, China, and India, were making it the wealthiest port in the world. The novel follows the careers of the four young sons of the Inman family, three of them sea captains, and the oldest, Dash, a veteran who had commanded the Crowninshields' *Belisarius* at nineteen!

Trouble brewing between Great Britain and Napoleon had made American shipping more than usually hazardous and in less than a twelvemonth the Inmans had lost three of their best ships — the *Dorcas* to the British at Gibraltar, the *Harlequin* to the French in the East Indies, and the *Antelope*, which Dash was bringing home with a cargo worth \$100,000, battered to pieces in one night of rain and gale on the Peaked Hill Bar off Cape Cod. Dash was sentenced to a year ashore by his grandmother, the present head of the house, and while he was doing penance the family mortgaged and borrowed for a final venture in their fast new ship, the *Victrix*. So the three young captains, Dash, Eleazar, and Tom, are on their mettle striving to restore their house flag of navy, with a diagonal white stripe, to the prosperity which it had known under their grandfather in the 1750's when his little fleet had made a steady profit in the West Indies and an occasional wealthy venture to the Baltic.

This picture of Salem in its pitch of activity comes to us for the most part through the eyes of Peter, the fourth and youngest brother, a thin youngster of sixteen. Peter is too frail for the sea; he has a studious bent that might have taken him to Harvard had there been more money and fewer problems. As it is, with his wiry strength and his sensitive mind he is the shock absorber of the family, the boy who worries things out until they are smooth.

Miss Forbes makes her story turn on the fateful fascination which has long existed between those two old Salem families, the Inmans and the Mompessons. The Inmans have always lived by the sea, fishermen first, then men of command and ship-owners; the Mompessons were the moneyed squires, the underwriters who stayed at home and made their play on a cargo. When witches were abroad, a Squire Mompesson had brought charges against Tabby Inman which led to the old woman's being hanged. Now one hundred years later pretty Polly Mompesson is the thorn in the flesh of Dash and

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Peter Inman, the sweet bewitcher who drives Dash to such extremities when he is on leave ashore.

Polly is the malefactor in this romance, a clue which the author gives us on an early page. "She could push other people into disaster — Liz or Peter, Dash himself. Little Miss Derby, Jack West, . . . but herself she could not save." Polly is the victim of that father-daughter relationship which almost strangled Elizabeth Barrett. A dark-blooded, passionate girl, helpless in Dash's arms, she becomes hidden and warped within the decorum and pose of her father's house. Polly is the magnet of the book, and I accept her as such; and Polly's relationship with her father is skillfully conveyed despite the fact that he is such a pompous little manikin that we never quite believe in him; he seems too bloodless for the style and insults which he intends.

The Salem which Miss Forbes has painted for us is the Salem ashore, not afloat. It is the Salem of Essex and Chestnut Streets in the Golden Age, the Salem of the great spacious houses built by McIntire and furnished with the wealth and curios of Europe and the Orient, the Salem which looked down so condescendingly on Marblehead, the Salem of happy children returning from their beach parties, the Salem of the busy wharves when a dozen great ships might be readying to sail on the outgoing tide. The feminine, the distaff side of the town is revealed in a hundred deft touches, and when the ships return and the men walk in we see them high-lighted as it were against the emotion of homecoming or the passionate omen of departure. The color and essential masculinity of the town when the fleet is making ready have the touch of authenticity, but the chapters at sea and the snatches of seafaring talk as they come back to us from the parlors do not carry an equal force. The typhoon which almost wrecks the *Victrix* has not the awful force of one of H. M. Tomlinson's storms, nor is there any scene aboard ship to equal those superb chapters in Masfield's *Bird of Dawning* when the clippers come racing up the Channel with all sails set. It is of men ashore and of women who wait that Miss Forbes writes — and that, after all, was essentially the Salem which was at last left high and dry.

The warning sense of danger

The professional white hunters like Monsieur Defosse of Indo-China, Major Jim Corbett of India, and Major P. J. Pretorius of South Africa form a clan of hardy survivors. Pretorius, the last-named, was the chief scout for Field Marshal Smuts on many an African campaign. He was the man who tracked down the German warship *Königsberg* in the Rufiji River and held her all unsuspecting until the monitors arrived. "One has the impression," writes General Smuts, "that he became a great scout among men because he was the supreme scout

among wild animals. Courage, coolness in facing up to danger, extreme resourcefulness and a sense of realities which is unanalyzable and amounts to instinct or genius — these are the qualities that go to the making of a great hunter. Repeatedly in this book he speaks of occasions when without any apparent reason he had a warning sense of danger which turned out to be well founded."

That Introduction alerts us for the calm-voiced, utterly exciting autobiography, *Jungle Man* (Dutton, \$3.75), the terse volume of recollections which, with the help of a friend, Pretorius set down shortly before his death in 1945. Thin, lithe, colored brown from his continual bouts with malaria and the life spent under the blazing sun, Pretorius could pass more easily as an Arab or Somali than as a European.

He was born, as he tells us, "with the divine unrest of adventure in my blood." When he was thirteen his father took him on a long trek into King Khama's country, trading horses and cattle with the natives. The boy returned home with the ambition to walk Africa from one end to the other, and the uneventful life of a Transvaal farm could never hold him after that first glimpse. He ran away from home — it was twenty-five years before he saw his parents again — at the age of sixteen; for eighteen months he worked in the Chicago Gaiko Mine and with his savings he gradually assembled the equipment for his first expedition: .303 rifle, a few hundred rounds of ammunition, a tent, and the calico, brass, wire beads, and so forth, to trade with the natives. Then in 1899 he started out on his own, bound for the Zambesi River, the first of a series of death-dealing adventures which were to carry him beyond the reach of any other white man, which were to expose him to every kind of tropical hardship, and from which at the end of fifty years he was to emerge with a whole, if somewhat scarred, hide.

Pretorius had a natural aptitude for languages, and could talk with authority with any native anywhere. He never pauses to tell us about this linguistic accomplishment and I rather wish he had. He never forgot any detail he had observed about animals, and some of them are arresting — as, for instance, when he tells us that "a baby baboon only a day or two old knows immediately that the danger of a scorpion lies in his tail, and if he catches one, will first of all break off the tail and throw it away."

But his two most remarkable faculties are his fortitude and his accuracy with a gun. His body could stand any amount of racking from malaria, dysentery, or thirst; he could operate on himself as he did in 1914 without anesthetics, with only a sharpened knife, when his leg was black with gangrene; when hunting the rogue elephants in the Addo he killed again and again at the range of from five to eight paces; and when he was invited

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to stage some films of a lion hunt in the Knysna Forest he used himself as bait with some wonderful results which unfortunately the photographer was always too frightened to catch.

In all, Pretorius shot 557 elephants, and presumably if there had been one less the book would not have been written. It is not a sense of squeamishness on my part, but a dislike of repetition, which slackens my interest in the shooting of *Jungle Man*. As the narrative proceeds I find myself much more interested in the side lights of Africa than in the bigger scenes where the beast comes to a dead stop two yards from the author's toe.

Boston young and old

I sometimes think that the country cousin who comes to Boston as John Marquand and Cleveland Amory did, or the adopted son who has lived here for a quarter of a century like **David McCord**, is able to describe the town with more clarity, affection, and understanding than the city-born. In his new book *About Boston: Sight, Sound, Flavor & Inflection* (Doubleday, \$2.50), Mr. McCord has devoted his prose, his verse, and thirty-five line drawings to the revelation of that city and way of life which other Americans will always laugh at and at least in part envy. His essays fall pleasantly on the ear as they did when they came to us on the air. They are full of telling and unsuspected little details of which the author is a famous collector. They have the glint of laughter and the gay and poking lilt of a writer who turns to verse when prose would be too slow.

Mr. McCord is a country man who loves to skin out of his city shell. Brought up as a boy in the Rogue River valley of Oregon, he has that open-mindedness about birds, trees, riverways, and the physical architecture of a city which adds such zest to his prose. In his hands the growth of the Public Garden becomes a living thing. We see the ropewalks along the marsh at the bottom of the Common as they were in the 1790's; we see the little island, which the British had fortified, leveled off and the soil mixed with oyster shells enough to fill in the small botanical garden of twenty-four acres. For a while circuses used it for a camping ground; then Frederick Olmsted and Charles Sargent began their planning. A pond of four acres is shored up, the tulip bulbs are brought over from Holland, and the migratory birds come down on what Mr. McCord rightly calls so beautiful a landing field.

Whether he is writing about the North End or the Charles River, Louisburg Square, the Boston artists, Philip Hale, or Boston Harbor as seen from the air, Mr. McCord conveys a happy blend of past and present and an appreciation of the ever changing mood of a great city. His concluding essay, "Early and Late," is as poetic an appraisal as I have ever read of this red-brick town. Delightful vignettes by a skilled and sensitive hand.



Reader's Choice

BY

CHARLES J. ROLO

"WHAT the world needs above all," says Professor Toynbee, "is to get the issue of free enterprise versus socialism off its ideological pedestal and to treat it, not as a matter of semi-religious faith . . . but as a common sense question of . . . circumstance and adaptation." This month's nonfiction is a reminder that Toynbee's point is an insistent challenge to U.S. thinking, which is reverting to zealotism on the subject of free enterprise.

In *The West at Bay* (Norton, \$3.50), **Barbara Ward**, one of England's outstanding economists, argues pretty convincingly that the Marshall Plan's success hinges in part on U.S. noninterference with practices contrary to the Hoyle of U.S. capitalism. Here is a potential source of friction and recrimination, and the platitude about better understanding takes on a new urgency, whose measure is our immense stake in the regeneration of Western Europe. It is that understanding which F. O. Matthiessen, Professor of Literature at Harvard, continually reaches for in his journal of a half year in Central Europe. **Sam Welles**, on the other hand, has a tendency in *Profile of Europe* (Harper, \$3.50) to evaluate the Old World from the *Weltanschauung* of Rockefeller Center, Mr. Welles's home base as an associate editor of *Time*.

European roundup

Welles is a practiced hand at whipping fact, anecdote, and comment into readable shape, and his book has a great deal of interesting information to offer. Finland, Welles reports, retains a surprising measure of freedom. Sweden impresses him as the most materialistic country in Europe — and the most jittery. A Polish Socialist sums up trade relations with Russia: "Russia gets our coal and in return we give them our textiles." The American Mission in Greece "have an awesome ignorance of the political side of the job." And so forth — a newsy Baedeker to all of post-war Europe. The editorial contribution is sligher.

Welles's commentary on Russia — where he spent ten weeks and to which he devotes half of the book — runs to the standard strictures on inefficiency and tyranny and the standard comparisons with U.S. practice, a motif which much repetition has made somewhat pointless. As against this, his actual data are often fresh and arresting. Those showing

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Russia's astonishing industrial weakness, if accurate, amply justify Welles's conclusion that Stalin cannot afford to wage war for at least fifteen years. What U.S. foreign policy desperately needs, Welles stresses, is consistency. At present it is a far greater enigma to Europeans than Russian policy.

The space devoted to the other countries is rather skimpy. This, plus overpreoccupation with "free enterprise versus socialism," leads to occasional superficiality and snap judgments. Holland, Welles remarks, "chose [my italics] the austerity way of recovery," whence the Dutch aren't working as hard as the Belgians, who preferred "a practical business approach." Holland, Miss Ward shows, had no choice whatsoever, flooding having caused immense dislocations, whereas the Belgian economy was relatively undamaged. Low productivity in Western Germany is due to its being "caught between British socialism and U.S. free enterprise"; judging from Miss Ward's thoroughgoing survey of the German economy, this is glib oversimplification. A look-see at the Arabian oil fields seems to have convinced Welles that the "ism" the Arabs want is Americanism; when I was in the Middle East, they called it Arabism. Such complaints notwithstanding, the book is a journalistic tour de force: only John Gunther has gathered so much about so many places in so little time.

The vogue for the foreign correspondent's up-to-the-minute report, the eagerness of statesmen and diplomats to tell all, have crowded out the reflective type of travel book by the intellectual, which has been the preferred brand of foreign reportage in European publishing. (Gide on Russia, Maurois on America, Graham Greene on Mexico, Huxley on the world at large.) F. O. Matthiessen's *From the Heart of Europe* (Oxford, \$3.50) shows, as Edmund Wilson's *Europe Without Baedeker* did a year ago, that the intellectual can be a more stimulating commentator than most of the ace newsmen hell-bent on fact-finding and record-breaking mileage.

Matthiessen spent the summer of 1947 teaching at the Salzburg American Seminar, attended by students from sixteen countries, and the winter at Charles University in Prague. Explicitly not a formal report on these and other places visited — Bratislava, Budapest, Copenhagen — it covers matters literary and artistic and con-

tains a keen analysis of political currents. Matthiessen's primary purpose, though, in writing this "journal of opinions" was "to think about . . . some of the things it means to be an American today." This leads him to do a good deal of thinking about the things it means to be a European.

From the personal histories, the behavior, doubts, and ambitions of his students, Matthiessen manages to convey a sharp sense of the moral temper and climate of ideas among Central European intellectuals. Also a warm and discerning picture of the everyday conditions of their lives. His American commentary, energized by the stimulus of contrast, re-examines our literary masters; subjects various facets of a materialist culture to a pointed critique; tests and sharpens his own credo — that of a Christian and a socialist who does not put the economics of socialism on an "ideological pedestal." What *From the Heart of Europe* offers is, essentially, the companionship of a rich, humane, truly civilized intellect — a traveler of insight and integrity.

Western Federation

"Why do the British get all these deficits — they never used to?" Congressman Taber has fretfully asked. He will find the answer to this and a host of other billion-dollar questions in *The West at Bay*. Miss Ward's prose, unlike that of some economists, is agreeably free from complexity and she puts no strain on the layman with a slight grasp of economics. Hers is a superlative analysis of the world economic crisis, one of the most valuable books published this year.

The crisis reflected in the European dollar shortage, Miss Ward argues, is not simply the result of wartime dislocations — in several dollar-starved European countries productivity is back to pre-war level. It represents, rather, the passing of the nineteenth-century economic system founded on (1) division of labor between industrialized Europe and an unindustrialized outside world supplying it with cheap food and raw materials; (2) the "sterling standard" as the lubricant of international trade. World-wide industrialization and the wartime sale of Britain's foreign assets — the interest on which went far toward preventing the deficits which puzzle Taber — are two of the elements in the story of basic economic change headlined by Europe's loss of suprem-

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acy to the United States, a quasi-revolution in the status of the Far East, and the isolation of Eastern Europe under Communism.

In U.S. post-war policy toward Europe, Miss Ward finds no trace of "imperialism" but signs of an "escapist nostalgia" to restore a world economic order "with a remarkably nineteenth century look." The changes mentioned, however, have written the epitaph of this vanished world. Western Europe must create something new in order to achieve stability: a unified economy. That, indeed, is the goal encouraged by the Marshall Plan. But between the Plan's goal and the means of achieving it lies a harsh paradox which Miss Ward brings into relief: "To create the kind of unity which the Americans hoped for and to secure the balance in Europe's dollar account (which was the fundamental aim) the Sixteen Nations might be obliged to pursue policies which the United States, theoretically at least, would find unacceptable." While U.S. imports remain so slight, the dollar shortage can only be dealt with by regulation, planning, even "discrimination" designed to encourage purchases outside the dollar area.

A happier but remote solution, of course, would be a U.S. policy of massive purchases and investment abroad, which would enable the dollar to fill the sterling's former role as lubricant of international trade.

Miss Ward goes on to discuss the prospects of an American slump; the several steps already taken in the direction of European integration and the steps projected; the intricate politics of Western Federation. *The West at Bay* conveys the encouraging impression that, despite huge difficulties, Western Europe has begun to inch its way toward some form of unity.

Roosevelt: myth and more myth

"Behold Europe!" exclaims John T. Flynn, and what he beholds can't be the place the last three authors have talked about. Democracy in Flynn's Europe is altogether *kaputt*, as a result of our liberating it from Hitler. Even England is "on its way to Fascism." And now behold Flynn's America! It can't be the place where there's a boom on, and Republicans are of good cheer. For what Flynn beholds is a state rotted by a "fatal deformity of [the] political and economic system," also thanks to quarreling with the Nazis and the Japanese. Well, whatever the trouble is

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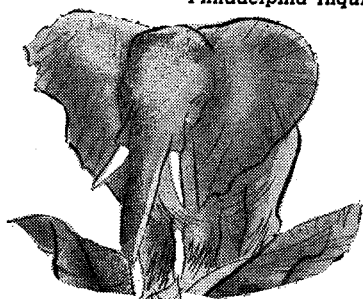
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and wherever it is, Mr. Flynn would have you know that a small man called Roosevelt was to blame. Small? If you think he was medium-large, just read *The Roosevelt Myth* (Devin-Adair, \$3.50), which presents him "reduced in size to agree with reality." Unfortunately Flynn has done so much reducing that you wind up with precious little reality.

To be sure, the Roosevelt myth-makers greatly inflated and bowdlerized reality. But at this juncture, the diplomatic disclosures made since the war, the many post-mortems of the New Deal era, have substantially corrected the perspective. When Flynn proclaims that Roosevelt preached economy then practiced spending, that his treatment of top associates was less than commendable, that his Teheran-Yalta diplomacy was at fault, it is hardly a myth in good standing that he's debunking.

However, the book contains a fair amount of material bearing on the myth as currently extant. Some of the factual details are persuasive and cause the reality to shrink. Some of them are a blot on the reality, if true; for instance, the account of White House influence on the Roosevelt sons' financial affairs. But the over-all picture simply transmogrifies "pro" myth into "anti" myth.

Flynn's portrait of Roosevelt "reduced in size" stacks up as follows: He was a man of no distinction whatsoever — a bad student at Harvard, a failure in law practice — who got elected President. He was "without political or economic philosophy," and he led the nation toward an idea which "Mussolini had adopted" and later Hitler. His program was a total failure. He asked of the people "nothing but that they vote for him," and paid them to do so. Then he betrayed them into war so that he might enjoy the role of world savior. He could not write a speech; he was woefully ignorant of economics and finance and conditions abroad. He had neither social consciousness nor ideals nor a scrap of integrity.

This indictment is confected by a gifted pamphleteer, skilled at making facts serve his hates, a virtuoso of the sneer and the smear. Flynn's hyperthyroid prose is never dull. But his reasoning is palsied with malice, fanaticism, and embittered isolationism. The identification of England's "social democracy" with fascism is typical of Flynn's turn of mind, which runs to incessant abuse of "intellectuals,"

to crackpot homilies on European history and a delight in juggling with the stereotypes of the Hearst-McCormick press. His judgment of men hardly inspires confidence — his preferred authority on high statesmanship is John Garner. He implies it was perverse of the Chinese not to accede to Japan's modest war aims. He charges that Roosevelt's war strategy put victory second to his itch for world leadership, arguing, in a total *non sequitur*, that this made him substitute the North African landings for a projected cross-Channel invasion in '43, thus giving Stalin time to overrun Europe. The possibility of failure, the cost in blood, the fact that the Russians were hollering for a second front and isolationists like Flynn for no front at all — all this is omitted.

"Fear hath a hundred eyes"

Joseph Conrad's indictment of the tsarist autocracy — "the ruthless destruction of innumerable minds . . . of dignity, of truth, of rectitude, of all that is faithful in human nature" — sums up the ravages of modern fascism which Flynn ignores when he cries "fascism" at the drop of an economic plan. Those ravages — that destruction of minds and human ties and the accompanying climate of "darkness at noon" — are dramatized in *Man Is Strong* (Knopf, \$3.00), a novel by Corrado Alvaro. The book was published in Italy in 1939, after Alvaro had added a foreword stating that the police state described was Russia.

Scourges as immense as fascism and war present the novelist with a knotty problem of ways and means. A Frenchman has aptly remarked that "a single man killed is a misfortune, a million is a statistic." How to encompass the emotional reality of that aggregate of horrors which so easily becomes "a statistic" or a remote abstraction — "war dead," "purge," "pogrom"? Camus's answer in *The Plague* was vividly realistic allegory. Alvaro's is the symbolism and surrealism of Kafka, with its dreamlike intensity. Many of his devices have their exact parallel in *The Trial* — the mysterious circumstance left unexplained, the sinister coincidence, the felt presence of unseen, omnipotent powers, and so on.

The story opens with the return of Dirck, an expatriate, to his native country, recently emerged from civil war. Instantly, the atmosphere is that of waking nightmare. People

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stare "with hate" at Dirck's good clothes. Strange officials know his name and face. His room is searched. Barbara, with whom he renews an old love affair (years earlier she had been abroad), is terrified that to be seen with him will "incriminate" her. Danger and senseless prohibition hang over everything, and Dirck is rapidly infected with the cringing anxiety which is the norm—the obsessive consciousness that "they" are watching, listening, condemning. He feels guilty of a nameless crime, which he has *not* committed—and is certain to commit. "My dear," says his superior, "often the mere appearance of guilt is a crime."

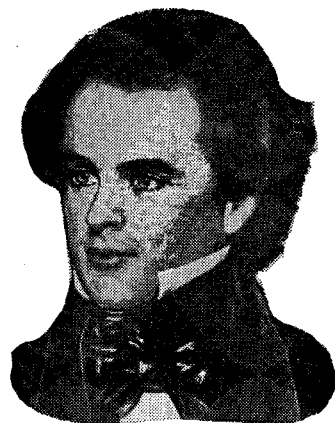
Dirck's initiation into this "mysticism of crime" comes from a chance meeting with "the investigator," who takes him to an office decorated with pictures of hanged men. "We must destroy everything private, personal, intimate; there lies the cause of all evils," says the investigator. "To have a secret is a crime." Execution of the guilty makes crime "as beneficial an example to society as that set by the most loyal citizen." The prospective criminal "interests us enormously. . . . We need him." Corrupters, too, are needed to keep society well supplied with the spectacle of educative punishment, and the man from abroad is ideal for this form of "publicservice." Everything about him incites the guilty. "To borrow a term from religion, he is the devil." Dirck now sees clearly that his love for Barbara is a criminal conspiracy against the state. And when eventually, crazed by fear, he commits a real crime, he feels that some monstrous plan which "they" conceived has been accomplished.

Since I've seen the book criticized for the very thing it aims at, its surrealistic quality, I should perhaps say that if you insist on lifelike characterization and the other qualities of conventional realism, then Alvaro is decidedly not your man. What he is so successful in achieving is the anguished climate of nightmare and baleful unreason. His book has, too, something of that tension of ideas which distinguished *Darkness at Noon*. It is a thoroughly unusual novel, and, to my mind, a remarkable one. The quality of its telling has been expertly rendered in Frances Frenaye's translation.

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pass the defenses of the mind and strike directly at the heart and what survives of childhood sensibility. It is a gothic fairy tale, set in a nightmarish woodland, which she uses to project the nightmare essence of war and persecution, and to depict the two kinds of innocence in the face of calamity: purity of spirit and criminal frivolity.

Charade (Viking, \$2.50) is a story of babes who have, literally, fled into the woods to escape ogres; it is told by a fourteen-year-old girl. A famous anti-Nazi German poet, his wife, the actress who is his mistress, his daughter (the narrator), and his son have taken refuge in a hunting lodge in Poland. The surrounding forest has its traditional denizens: the good fairy — a cow which gives them milk — and her mad attendant; the tragic, gnome-like Jewish children hiding in a cellar; the kindly dwarf; the donkey-headed aristocrat, nostalgic for "the good old days," complacent they will be restored and crassly selfish. These and the poet's ménage — he obsessed with classical antiquity, the actress with her illusion of talent, the son (prototype of the budding Nazi) with his virility — enact in the dark forest a charade which represents, in fantastically microcosm, the world at war.

War makes one of its appearances as the dreadful apparition which turns out to be the remnants of a man; anti-Semitism as the one-legged boy, screeching and flapping, whom Nazi sadism has converted into a human rooster. And through the narrator, the wisdom of childhood expresses its bewildered comment on the madness of adults.

Mrs. Morris has chosen the most urgent of all themes and has clothed it in a boldly original form. Her sort of symbolic tale is capable of strongly emotional effects, of reconverting the anonymous "statistic" into a living horror. It also runs the constant risk of naïveté, mawkishness, "cuteness." Edita Morris reaps high dividends from her method and sometimes succumbs to its dangers. The balance is in her favor.

Italian awakening

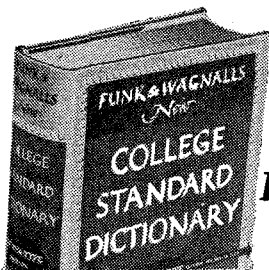
Alvaro's *Man Is Strong* is a sample of the literature of thinly veiled protest which survived under Fascism, a mild tyranny (by comparison with Hitlerism or Stalinism) in so far as the arts were concerned. Mussolini seems to have realized that drastic regimentation would throttle Italian

culture. His censorship was lackadaisical. His Ministry of Education even granted subsidies to high-brow publications, most of whose contributors were non-Fascists or anti-Fascists — a policy which in effect created what a Roman editor described to me as "a subsidized, quasi-official underground." As a result, the arts were not only saved from the eclipse they suffered in Germany: they actually retained a measure of vitality which, under the impetus of the liberation, expressed itself in a burst of creative activity.

This literary *risorgimento*, I discovered last year in Italy, rapidly produced a number of first-rate novels, which are now beginning to reach us. Their special qualities, broadly speaking, are similar to those which have won such high praise for the post-war Italian films shown here: *Open City*, *Shoe Shine*, *To Live in Peace*, and *Paisan*. In books such as Vittorini's *Conversations in Sicily* and Moravia's *The Roman Woman*, both due here this winter, you will find a concern with the basic human needs, a direct confrontation of the elemental problems — man's fate; Good and Evil — in short a deep seriousness of purpose, but allied with extreme simplicity of manner and other gifts that make for readability. Alongside of these novels, the topics which preoccupy some of our serious writers — the antics of the ultra-rich or the neuroses of the overcompetitive ego — seem strangely trivial and artificial.

The qualities just mentioned are also evidenced in a somewhat lesser novel, Giuseppe Berto's *The Sky Is Red* (New Directions, \$3.25), now published in an excellent translation by Angus Davidson. The book is centered on four adolescents left homeless and destitute by a catastrophic air raid on an unnamed city which resembles Florence. It was written, paradoxically, while Berto was a prisoner of war in Texas, and turned out to be a runaway best-seller.

Though Berto's story depicts the impact of war on his young protagonists, its underlying theme is the shocking plight of the Italian poor. Daniele, the sixteen-year-old son of a prosperous official, loses his parents in the big raid and finds himself sharing, with a boy and two girls from the slums, an abandoned house in an area declared "infected" because of unrecovered corpses. The squalid pre-war background of Dan-



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iele's companions has been etched in the opening pages. "We were poor and wretched even before the war," one of them says to him. "The war . . . hasn't changed things much for us. . . . We don't bother much whether the things we do are good or bad. All that matters is that they should serve their purpose." The primary purpose has never been any different—survival. But conditions are more desperate and the authorities are callously indifferent.

Tullio, aged seventeen, has become head of a gang of youthful Robin Hoods. "I'm a Communist," he confides to Daniele, and when asked what that means he says, "It means that things are not going right, as they are now. There is too much misery everywhere. There are still too many people who live well and who don't care a damn about the rest." (That answer, incidentally, accounts for a high percentage of Italy's several million Communist votes.) Tullio's fifteen-year-old mistress, Carla, sells herself to the liberators for canned food and cigarettes. The younger girl, Giulia, keeps house. Daniele, who refuses to steal, hunts desperately for any sort of work. Together they look after a dim-witted little waif orphaned by the raid.

Three emotional strands are interwoven in the direly tragic sequence of events: the brutalizing effects of the struggle to keep alive; the contrasting kindness, the sense of solidarity of the young delinquents; the wonderfully tender love between Daniele and Giulia. *The Sky Is Red* is thoroughly sentimental but never cloying. Written with unflinching realism and a deeply tragic sense of life, it has a heartbreaking sadness, an intensely human appeal.

The downward path

"One of the best of our [English] novelists," Elizabeth Bowen says of Joyce Cary, and when *The Moonlight* was published here last year several reviewers agreed. Its successor, *Herself Surprised* (Harper, \$3.00), is the life story, in the first person singular, of one of the most engaging and subtly realized heroines of recent fiction. Here is a saga of the downward path which has robust reality and intense feeling, and which is richly humorous in the telling.

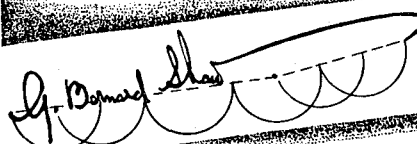
Sara is a creature of immaculate respectability; her frailty is rooted in too generous a heart. She cannot

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understand it when the judge, who sentences her to eighteen months, says she has behaved like a woman without any moral sense. As a girl she was a young "sobersides," brought up in a religious home and happy to be a cook in good service. She knew what was right, but men, poor things, had a hard time with "their nature" — and Nature had fashioned her, in ample outline, for their solace.

You may think she was flighty to have married Mr. Matt, who was a gentleman, but she couldn't stand to see a grown man so hampered and hagged by his mother. When Matt was gone, it was old Jimson's pestering, for he was an abashless mannie, which made her Mrs. Jimson. (To tell the truth they never did get married — Jimson had a wife.) Jimson was an artist and like all of them a bit in the freakish way. He couldn't earn a penny and he beat her and eventually ran off with a young slummock. But she was happy with him and grew soft to her sins. And when she was housekeeper to old Mr. Wilcher and he asked for "an addition to his comforts," she accepted just to save him from trouble with the Law, for he was forever pinching minors in the park. To all these men she was a real helpmeet, and her cheese soufflés were a fair treat.

Potpourri

OUR GIFTED SON by Dorothy Baker.
Houghton Mifflin, \$2.75.

Mexico's Pacific coast; a mother's death while her son was abroad; a style capable of suggesting infinite subtleties and sometimes irritatingly mannered — these provide the mood, mystery, and literary flavor of Dorothy Baker's third novel. The plot is of the "conjuring trick" variety. You are introduced to a situation in which something is amiss, and to several promising characters — a young Mexican pianist, his tyrannic father, his former American governess, who wears her forty years with alluring chic and is said to be a lush. Their conduct, their talk, continually promise a revelation, disclose nothing, but still hold you. Seldom have private lives remained so very private until the last chapter. The suspense turns out to have been built on something of a fraud, and the climax is rank melodrama. By this time, though, it doesn't much matter. You have had several hours' fascinating reading.

BRIDIE STEEN by Anne Crone. Scribner, \$3.00.

Anne Crone's first novel is set in an Irish border county, where Catholics and Protestants are "two kinds of people"

between whom flows "a river of darkness." Opening with Bridie's childhood in the home of poor foster parents, who reared her as a Catholic, the story carries her into the impressive household of her Protestant grandmother. There Bridie falls in love with a Protestant and is caught between immense pressures to "turn" and an allegiance, deep as instinct, to her faith. Miss Crone's achievements are several: the characterization of Bridie, wonderfully delicate and vital; the memorable lesser portraits; the vivid landscape, with its bogs and lakes and whitewashed farmhouses; the impartial eloquence with which the theme of religious bigotry and the resulting tragedy are handled. *Bridie Steen* is hardly, as Lord Dunsany says, "one of the great novels of our time"; thoroughly old-fashioned in flavor, it harks back to the Hardy tradition. But it is, unquestionably, a fine, beautifully written book.

THE LAST OF THE CONQUERORS by William Gardner Smith. Farrar, Straus, \$2.75.

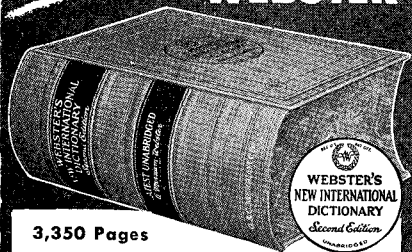
This first novel by a twenty-year-old Negro veteran is certain to attract attention by reason of its highly charged theme. It's the story of a Negro soldier in the Army of Occupation, who discovers in Germany what it feels like to be treated as a human being. In Berlin there is no color line. The women find him attractive, *the more so because of the fact that he is colored*. One of them falls desperately in love with him and is eager to marry him. Suddenly he is transferred to a post ruled by the Jim Crow spirit, and is cruelly victimized in a campaign to discredit Negro troops and force them out of ETO. As a social document the book achieves a powerful impact. From the literary standpoint it is strong in structure, weak in style — strong enough all round to suggest that this exceedingly young writer may turn out to have real talent.

WASHINGTON WITCH HUNT by Bert Andrews. Random House, \$2.50.

The news stories on which this book is based won Bert Andrews, chief of the New York *Herald Tribune's* Washington bureau, a Pulitzer Prize and other citations. It's a top-notch report on the case of the Hollywood writers; of Dr. Condon, the distinguished scientist smeared by the Thomas Committee; and of "Mr. Blank," the State Department official dismissed "as a potential security risk" without being told what was insecure about him. Mr. Andrews is one of the many uncompromising enemies of Communism outraged by the contempt for civil liberties, the dictatorial methods of the Washington witch-hunters. Since to be a Communist is not illegal, the Hollywood writers, he concludes, were as justified in refusing to answer the Committee as Eisenhower would have been if asked: Are you a Democrat or a Republican? The headline-

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mind, scalp-hungry Congressmen mentioned by Mr. Andrews might benefit from a copy of this book — suitably inscribed — as an election-year gift from watchful constituents.

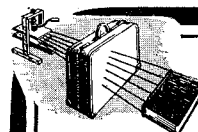
THE WHITE GODDESS by Robert Graves.
Creative Age, \$4.50.

Robert Graves warns his admirers that "this remains a very difficult book, as well as a very queer one." Subtitled "a historic grammar of poetic myth," it sets out to rediscover the "lost rudiments" of poetry and "the active principles of poetic magic that govern them." Mr. Graves's proposition is that "pure poetry" has only a single language and a single infinitely variable theme. His fabulously complex exposition seeks to show that the ancient cult of the White Goddess and its attendant myths are the very substance of poetry, the White Goddess being the triple deity of Birth, Love, and Death, known as Maia, Aphrodite, Artemis, and by countless other names. The myths became garbled or disguised (whence this project) during the long struggle between the worshipers of the White Goddess and of the masculine (anti-poetic) deities who now dominate our civilization: "Pluto god of wealth, Apollo god of science and Mercury god of thieves." Even if Graves's bizarre thesis is discounted, there's substantial profit to be had from his astounding erudition; his provocative interpretations of myths, riddles, and mystery cults; the incidental insights of an adventurous mind.

SHERIDAN: HIS LIFE AND HIS THEATRE by Lewis Gibbs. Morrow, \$4.00.

It's forty years, says the publisher, since an adequate biography of Sheridan has appeared. The present one shows that the biographers have been neglecting a first-rate subject — which doesn't matter since Lewis Gibbs does handsomely by the author of *The School for Scandal*.

The Rivals made Sheridan famous at twenty-four. At twenty-eight he gave up playwriting to become manager of the Drury Lane Theatre, and for the next thirty-two years he was also a prominent Member of Parliament. Born with neither "pedigree nor property," he was buried in state at Westminster Abbey. Charles Fox said he knew no one wittier and Byron agreed. He was an orator in the grand manner. His charm made him a favorite with the Prince of Wales. Sheer force of personality kept him in the limelight until his death. But his private life was hideously chaotic. Though married to a celebrated beauty, he remained an "off-repentant but incorrigible philanderer." Excessive drinking ruined his health. Extravagance and mismanagement saddled him with crushing debts — his creditors even harried him on his death-bed. Lewis Gibbs tells "poor dear Sherry's" story with scholarship and spirit, humor and discrimination, and a lively feeling for the period.



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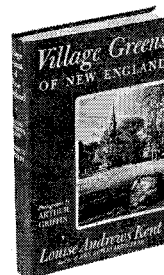
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Ascent on Living

THIS MONTH

As the Class of '52 moves in and unpacks, the Greeks are already winnowing the barbarians along Fraternity Row. Some thousands of "charges" are entering the annual ecstasy of self-renewal. The undergraduate of sufficiently bland racial, religious, and financial status awaits the call of brotherhood. The insufficiently bland will join the Commons Club or whatever euphemism the college has devised for barb-solidarity. The college president turns resolutely away from the whole subject: these are matters of taste and congeniality for the boys to settle among themselves — and besides, the college could never afford to take over all that real estate at today's prices.

Fraternity Row is a neighborhood of teen-age Little Scorpions Clubs, each with its secret grip, passwords, and recognition signals. It may well be that all fraternities are using the same grip without knowing it; but no matter, since secrets of this caliber, like the mysterious meanings of the Greek letters themselves, can never be divulged, let alone compared. Each group or chapter occupies, or hopes to occupy, a rather more expensive house than it can afford. (Fraternity house mortgages usually run for a fixed term of, say, two hundred years and represent about 150 per cent of the property's estimated market value as of the spring of 1929.) The local chapter keeps decently to itself, avoiding traffic with neighbor fraternities and above all with the barbs, but it maintains, or would if the occasion arose, a vehemently brotherly relationship with its "affiliated" chapters elsewhere. Thus, whether the college is large or small, the fraternity man can go through it as one entitled not to meet more than forty or fifty other undergraduates. Moreover, he can wear a pin which identifies him as the holder of this privilege. Fraternity meals, like the fraternity mortgage — and probably in consequence of it — are distinctive, and few Americans not confined in a state prison eat anything comparable to them as a steady diet. Con-

sumption of ketchup along Fraternity Row is estimated at 1.27 gallons per week per brother.

By the simple method of Greek letter groupings, the undergraduate can tick off the qualities of the student body in a jiffy, and the social definitions which he learns at this stage will stay with him forever: the Alpha Alphas are grinds; the Beta Betas are a bunch of hicks; all Gamma Gammas are bone-head athletes; Delta Deltas drink too much; Theta Thetas are rich, very well-off; the Phi Phis, a new

crowd that used to be a local club, are quite impossible. All non-fraternity men, the culls, would prove to have some extraordinary defect of character if the truth were known.

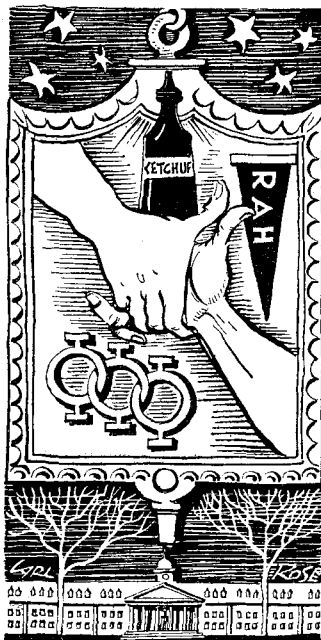
Beyond what it offers the undergraduate, the college fraternity is highly regarded by manufacturing and retail jewelers, dealers in seed pearls and chip diamonds, and, naturally, by the ketchup industry.

The principal beneficiary of the whole setup, however, is none of these, but an individual known as the executive secretary, perhaps the alumni secretary, of the national fraternity itself. It's a life job, and because no one really knows quite how the executive secretary got it, there is no ready way of getting rid of him and no reason for doing so anyhow. All executive secretaries die in harness, leaving a home in Scarsdale or Kenilworth, with a

three-car garage and a comfortable estate in high-grade securities.

Death must seem a welcome release to the executive secretary, whose entire life is spent in confecting doleful yet enthusiastic appeals for funds. Never was the crisis so dark or the prospect so brilliant for dear old Zeta Zeta — such is the schizoid theme which he is forever restating, in far-flung goat rooms which he visits annually, and in countless mimeographed communications to the graduate brotherhood.

The crisis is just as peculiar to the fraternity system as the food and the mortgage. It never



changes and each year it looms again, as predictable as the ocean tides. Word of it comes in the executive secretary's report to graduates about affairs at their old chapter house. Everything at the house is wonderful, but the graduates themselves are amazingly indifferent to the money needs of the national organization. Without the strong national patterns — lacking which, the secretary declares, no local chapter can keep afloat — the whole fellowship is going to smash.

Here again is one of the mysteries of the fraternity, for it must seem to the graduate that his local chapter is floating very buoyantly indeed, in spite of the woes of the national outfit.

Of all the mysteries in the fraternity system,

none is more inexplicable than the complete disappearance of the fraternity man, as such, shortly after his graduation from college. No managing editor was ever heard to say, even in a Hollywood film, "Lead the paper with Himmelfarber's story — he's a Sigma Sigma from the Wingding School of Mines! I understand the Tau Taus were after him too."

And the hostess still sizes up the extra man in terms of his availability for marriage rather than his Greek letter pedigree. Who ever heard of a fraternity man, even with distress signals flying, beating out a son-in-law for a fat job in the family business?

C. W. M.

TRAVEL

Author of many travel books, especially on New England and the West Indies, ELEANOR EARLY lives in New York and vacations in the tropics. Her last book was *New Orleans Holiday*; her next will be *New York Holiday*.

DOMINICA

by ELEANOR EARLY

IN DOMINICA in the British West Indies almost everybody is poor, and nearly everybody is happy. Houses rent for \$20 to \$45 a month, and a good cook gets \$2.50 a week. Rum is 60 cents a quart, and beefsteak 25 cents a pound.

If more people knew how pleasant it is to live in Dominica, then it wouldn't be so pleasant any more — because there would be a housing shortage and prices would go up. Many things would be spoiled, and people would not be so happy.

There is an old story, repeated in every guidebook, about how it is supposed to rain 365 days a year in Dominica. This is a completely untrue and libelous legend. But it may be one of the reasons why Dominica is not a tourist resort like some other West Indian islands.

It is not a smart and gay island like St. Thomas. And it has not been

exploited like Santo Domingo, where baseball clubs in spring training put Ciudad Trujillo on the map. Nor is it a tourist heaven like Jamaica with taxis and golf, and the Royal Yacht Club for cruising millionaires.

Yet Dominica is more beautiful than St. Thomas, more foreign than Santo Domingo, infinitely cheaper than Jamaica — and innocent as an enchanted land.

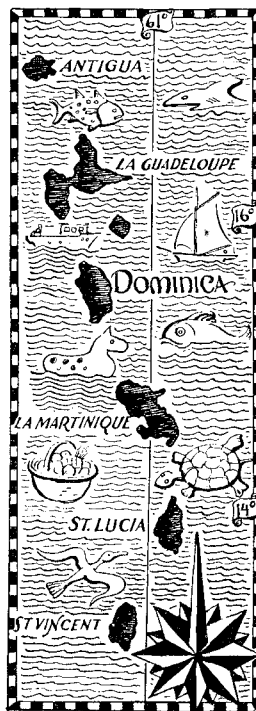
It is always warm in the West Indies and sometimes it is hot. But in Dominica it is not too hot and, despite the guidebooks, there is just enough rain to keep things attractive. The days are bright with sunshine, and the nights are filled with stars and fireflies. They are also filled with a lovely smell that comes from trees with big white blossoms called Ladies of the Night.

For nine months I lived in Dominica, and the only times it rained were at night. And the rain made everything clean in the morning, even the pigs and the goats. The waxy leaves of the magnolias gleamed, the rosy-cheeked mangoes shone in the sun. And the little papaws trembled, they were so shiny and clean.

Mangoes and papaws cost an English penny. Oranges, grapefruit, avocados, and tomatoes are also a penny. String beans, baby carrots, and tender young cabbage, big purple eggplants, greens, and black-eyed beans are comparably cheap. And there are various root vegetables, tania, dasheen, and yams, that are even cheaper.

There are 40,000 Negroes in Dominica and a handful of whites, 365 rivers, several mountains, and 18 automobiles. On the Atlantic side of the island there are beautiful beaches, some with pink sand and some with black.

On Saturdays the country people journey to Roseau, which is the capital city of the island, to buy and sell in the market place. Sometimes they bring in orchids that grow in the bush, and for 25



cents I have bought such sprays as fashionable florists sell for \$50 in the States.

In Roseau, meat is sold only on Saturdays, sirloins and flanks for 25 cents a pound. Sometimes it is good enough to broil but mostly it is tough. Native cooks wrap the tough meat in breadfruit leaves and bury it in the ground. They anoint it with cassareep and cook it with herbs. And then, if it is cooked long enough, it is tender.

I had a colored cook whose name was Auxanges ("Of the angels"). Her eyes were blue as the sea is blue, and she wore a red turban on her head and gold hoops in her ears. She would buy rabbits and crapauds, all skin and bones, and feed them on rice and coconut meat until they were big enough for a wonderful meal.

Crapauds are frogs that live in the mountains, where they grow to prodigious size. Once there were crapauds in all the islands of the West Indies. But mongoose, imported from India to kill snakes and rats, also killed the frogs. And now there are none except in Dominica, where they took to the mountains, and so they are called "mountain chickens."

Crapauds are caught in the dark of the moon by boys with flambeaux who blind the frogs with bright lights and grab them when they leap. The boys sell them alive, and the cooks fatten them until their long legs get plump and meaty. They are served in a sauce made of the soup stock and coconut cream, and crapaud à la king is better than any chicken you ever tasted.

Another specialty of the island is crab-backs, the meat from land crabs, boiled and picked and highly seasoned, flavored with garlic, simmered in lard, and served in the shells.

Fish in Dominica is usually plentiful and always cheap. The fishermen pull up their boats and blow on conch shells to let the people know that the fleet is in. Then the women gather on the beach to buy strange and beautiful fish with wonderful names — cockeyed pilots and big-eyed johns, oldwives and huge red snappers. If the sea has been good, there are turtles or crabs or lobsters.

Native produce is generally plenteous. But imported goods are scarce and costly, and the prices of imports affect some of the local produce. Eggs, for example, are six to eight cents apiece, and bread is baked in small loaves because of the high cost of Canadian grains. Butter, also from Canada, is about the price of butter in the States and considered a luxury at \$1 a pound.

There is nothing prohibitive, however, about the prices of French champagnes and vermouth. Dominica lies between the French islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe, and fishermen have ever found smuggling more profitable than trolling.

Native rums at 60 cents a quart are brash and



potent, and most visitors prefer a brandy-type rum from Barbados, legally priced at \$1.20 a quart. There is no better hot-weather drink, they say, than a swizzle made of Barbados rum and Dominican limes, with a dash of Angostura bitters from Trinidad.

Limes grow on nearly every hillside and are a penny a dozen. In season you can pick them in your own back yard. When I was in Dominica I had a little boy named Happy Lad, who gathered for me limes and oranges. Happy Lad also climbed the tall coconut palms, like a monkey in his bare brown feet, to shake down coconuts from the topmost branches. For these and other services he received 50 cents a week, and was considered the best-heeled boy in Roseau.

Happy Lad was also my bath boy. I had a bathhouse covered with jessamine, with a pool big enough to swim in, fed by a mountain stream that poured through the open roof of the bathhouse. Happy Lad dove every day into the water to pull out the bamboo plug. Then he scrubbed the sides of the pool with the fronds of a coconut palm. Sometimes Happy Lad found crayfish scurrying around at the bottom, and then I had *bisque d'écrevisses* for luncheon.

To get to Dominica one travels by sea. The *Lady Nelson* and the *Lady Rodney* of the Canadian National Steamships line, carrying 125 passengers each, sail alternately from Halifax with a few Canadians aboard, and put in at Boston for freight and the rest of their passengers. One-way minimum passage (ten days) from Boston to Dominica costs \$173 plus 15 per cent U.S. tax; maximum, \$433 plus tax. But one-way passage, unfortunately, is not always available.

There is no direct plane service to Dominica. Flying boats of British International Airways hop between most Caribbean islands, but never stop at Dominica. Neither do the big Clippers of Pan American. But the Clippers do fly to Antigua, north of Dominica, and to Barbados to the south, and small boats ply erratically back and forth between the islands. Unscheduled sailings, however, are nothing to count on. It is better to have your travel agent file application for passage on a Lady boat or advise you as to sailings that later may be scheduled on other lines. And eventually, since everything, even passage to Dominica, comes to



him who waits, you will find yourself in Roseau.

There is a small hotel called the Paz (Peace), as well as a number of boardinghouses. Rates at the Paz are \$4 a day, and a bit less at the boardinghouses. With a roof over your head you can, if it is a house you want, then go house-hunting.

In other days I have rented the Big House of an old plantation for \$25 a month, and staffed it with servants for less than I pay one part-time maid in New York. With the house went gardens and a hyacinth pool, groves of bananas and limes, many tall coconuts, and a view of the sea. The place rents now for \$40 and the tenant has a lifelong lease.



THE SPOILS

by DAVID BROCK

SAVAGES have often fed
On their foemen lying dead,
Thus absorbing (say they all)
The bravery of those who fall.
Little do they know or feel
All the ingredients of the meal. . . .
Other virtues, other sins,
Vitamins and mortimins,
Are absorbed throughout the night
Following the feast and fight.

By an imperceptible dose
Men become what they oppose;
There is many a Trojan horse
In that harmless roasted corse,
And thus the enemy though slain
Filters agents through the brain.
Eating dead totalitarians,
Who have not become barbarians?

Where's the sting of death? Why, there
In that body's mocking stare
As who should say without a breath:
"You, my foe, are eating death.
Thus you die and thus I live."
The Apothecary's Alterative
Might redirect this fell nutrition,
But savages have no Physician.

TRAVEL

A Londoner long a citizen of the United States, A. HAMILTON GIBBS is the author of many books and stories.

THE STREET CALLED SOLITUDE

by A. HAMILTON GIBBS

ONE end of Solitude is practically in the sea. The other blossoms into a noble tree-lined avenue in the heart of Havana. It is intersected by Virtue, Harmony, Neptune, St. Martin, St. Raphael, the Big Ditch, and Jesus the Pilgrim. Its current is passionate and deep. Tortured bodies come down Solitude for healing. Twisted souls creep into the shadow of the great Virgin of Carmen. Murder in blinding sunshine only stops traffic for the briefest moment, and a block away the unwanted baby can be poked through a hole in a wall to be taken care of by the quiet nuns and no questions asked. . . .

For four months I lived on Solitude Street, in a sky-high apartment at the sea end. Its back windows look out on escape, — a vast stretch of sub-tropical sea on which grow ships of all flags that come nosing their way past Morro Castle into the city, while clouds build themselves into castles so majestic that Morro and the Capitol and the whole city are reduced to impertinent pinpoints over which the black vultures eternally float and wheel on outspread wing tips; and below, like ants about their endless task, brown women hang up and take in miles of washing on an infinite number of flat red roof tops. And as the hot sun crawls up and down the sky, the city runs the gamut in changes of color, from drab limestone gray to stark white, from yellow ochre to rose pink, and on into deep blue, until finally night takes over and then the soft darkness becomes festooned with neon reds and oranges and greens and whites.

Enticing windows these, that let the trade winds blow in your face across a thousand miles of blue-green sea.

But on the other side of the apartment is the balcony, and the balcony looks down not on escape, but on unbelievable reality — on the surging street of Solitude in which the dawn comes up to the thunderous grind and clangor of streetcars, the petulant blasts of bus exhausts, the long deafening honks of auto horns, the shrill yells of newsboys bawling the headlines; a crescendo of magnificent assonance, dissonance, cacophony, swelling and sinking, at times a low roar punctured by the individual

melodious wail of a street vendor, the beat of a schoolboy drummer, by the birdlike screams of many urchins at recess, by



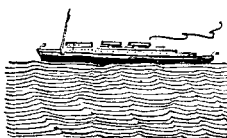
the strident longing of a juke-box tenor, by the barking of a toy dog on a neighboring balcony, by the growing tremendousness of a sound-truck urging the denizens to political fury, or by a burst of revolver shots at the corner which might imply either the slaughter of an insignificant steer that got away from the marketeer, or the equally insignificant shooting down of a University student for saying aloud what others have whispered. A trigger-happy people.

At moments like these, Solitude becomes Multitude indeed. From every balcony hang women and girls, leaning far over, waving excited hands; and in the street people begin to run. . . . Somewhere down there a sparrow has fallen. Perhaps it is registered somewhere. The dominating bronze Virgin of mercy gives no sign from her high tower. Only the floating vultures whirl momentarily nearer. . . . A breath only of interruption and then, under the baton of the Great Master, the symphony of urgent life swells again under the hot sun.

The trade winds are impotent to blow the noise of it away. They are no more than a spoon to stir it up. Inescapably one is in and of it, day and night vibrating, willy-nilly, to its rhythm. The glassless windows have only strips of wood that repel glare but welcome into your being the incessant roar of Solitude Street. According to your temperament, you can try turning your mind to other things; or you can get used to it once it has forced you to isolate the component elements of its percussion — guitars, horns, drums, maracas, pieces of wood being banged together, the exaggerating juke box in every open-air saloon, the off-key radio in every shop door, the hundred different calls of itinerant vendors.

If you are lucky enough to have the gift, you can revel in it, in the same way that you degeal in the fierce Cuban sun, surrender yourself to its un-northern manifestation of living, drink it in with the same excited liking with which you absorb its color, — the naked brown babies spilling out of dark doorways into the sunlight; the ancient knife grinder playing his Panpipe along the street; the piled-up fruit stand blazing under the branches of a laurel tree; brown-skinned girls sheathed in gaudy cotton dresses of yellow, violet, purple, green, but lovelier-featured than any Madonna; midinettes flirting along on the inevitable gold-strapped sandals, sisters under anybody's skin; brown children on roller skates flashing in and out of traffic as intricately as swallows; brown men dwarfed by enormous bouquets of artificial flowers so real that at a distance you can almost smell them; the broom man pushing a fantastic little cart with long antennae-like fishing rods with a brush at the tip; the white-haired Negro chanting his sugar cane, his enormous plantains that fry up like potato chips, his moun-

tains of tiny three-inch bananas that melt in the mouth; brown and white cherubs from the convent parading sedately in their blue and white uniforms; the street fair at the corner crowded with pickaninnies in rags riding the horses like centaurs, and daddy's darlings in frills being held on . . . endless, restless, throbbing, whether under the hot sun or the hot moon.



TRAVEL

MALCOLM LAPRADE, familiar to radio listeners for many years as "The Man from Cook's," has traveled in all parts of the world. In this article he gives a Mexican view of a sport which most Americans deplore.

MEXICAN GUIDE

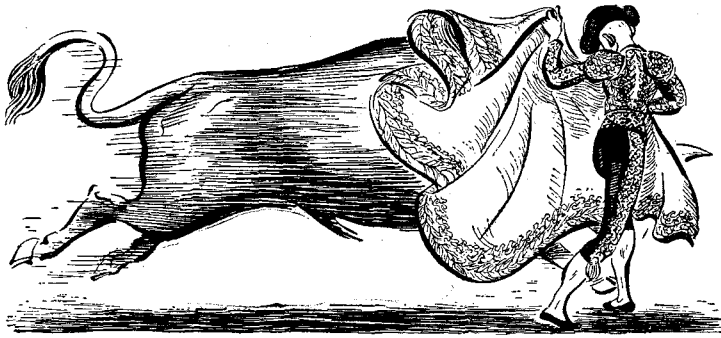
by MALCOLM LAPRADE

LADIES and gentlemen, I hope you have enjoyed your luncheon here at Xochimilco and that you have not been disappointed in these Floating Gardens which we call our Mexican Venice. You are now about to return to Mexico City and the Plaza de Toros. I shall accompany you, but in the excitement of the bullfights I shall not be able to answer the questions you may wish to ask; therefore, with your permission, I shall now speak to you for a few moments.

"Many Americans do not approve of the bullfight. They say it is not a sport because the bull cannot win, and it is brutal to kill him in this way. Thousands of cattle are killed every day in the stockyards but you do not think much about this cruelty; it is necessary to provide meat. Everyone likes a good beefsteak, no? But the bull that is killed in the arena also provides the beefsteak, and we Mexicans say that he dies with more honor than those others in the stockyards. These are not tame bulls which you will see in the Plaza de Toros. They are wild beasts. It is their nature to fight, and those that fight with great courage receive the applause equally with the men who face them. Often you will hear the crowd shout 'Bravo, Toro!' to honor a noble bull.



"It is true that the bull must be killed in the end even if he escapes the sword of the matador. No bull is permitted to fight twice. But do



not imagine that this is not also a dangerous game for the man. Of the famous matadors of history many have been killed in the ring and all have been wounded time and again. This can happen even to the most skillful *toreros*. Here in Mexico City we are still sad for the death of Manolete, who was killed a little more than a year ago in Spain. He was our idol, perhaps the greatest artist since Belmonte, and yet he lost his life in the ring. It is for this reason that the bullfight is to us the most emotional of all sports. We Mexicans love daring. It gladdens our hearts to see a brave man gamble with death.

"The Americans who come to Mexico like those things which are old and picturesque, so I must tell you that the bullfight is of very ancient origin. When the Moors introduced it to Spain in the twelfth century it was to encourage the use of warlike weapons. In the beginning the bull was attacked by a man armed only with a short javelin. Later on, the noble knights of Spain would go into the arena on horseback and fight the bull with a lance. On great occasions even a king or prince would take part in the contest to show his bravery to the people. In time it became the custom to kill the bull with a sword because this required the greatest daring.

"The bullfight of today retains these old-time traditions. There is the matador, what you in America call the star of the show. He is the *espada*, the man with the sword. You will see two picadors, mounted men who carry the long wooden poles with a short tip of steel. The picadors take the place of the knights of those old days. Then there are two or three *banderilleros*, men who go on foot and place the darts, which we call *banderillas*, in the bull's shoulders. These men are like the Moors who fought with javelins. So there you have the persons who will face each bull.

"In the beginning there is the grand procession of all the *toreros* who will take part in the six fights of this afternoon. This is very picturesque. You will also enjoy the music of the band between the fights, for it is always very gay. Everything moves so quickly that each fight is finished in fifteen minutes. We say in Mexico that everything else is for *mañana*, and only the bullfight is on time.

"A bullfight is a little drama in four acts. Many exercises take place in a short time, but I shall mention only a few of those which are most beautiful to watch.

"First you will admire the bull when he dashes out into the sunlight of the arena, filled with the desire for battle. You will think that no man would dare to face him, and you will be happy that the barrier around the ring is so high that he cannot jump over it and attack the spectators. But see now how the *banderilleros*, carrying only their big capes, run to meet this

bull and make him charge here and there. This is very important, for while they do this, the matador stands at the barrier observing every movement. He must determine if the bull charges straight, and if the bull favors one horn or the other when he hooks a cape.

"Now the matador will wave the other men away and go in himself to play the bull. He will go slowly, for it is undignified for a matador to run. He will present his cape and force the bull to charge again and again. And you will see how he appears to wind the bull around his body with those butterfly movements of the cape which are called *verónicas*. This is a very graceful exercise named in honor of St. Veronica, who presented her handkerchief to the Saviour, holding it, so we are told, with both hands as the matador holds his cape. Seven times he will bring the bull around as he wishes, always very close in; then to show that he is the master, the matador will turn his back upon those sharp horns and walk slowly to the barrier.

"Now it is the turn of the picadors. Each of these must strike the bull's shoulder muscle with the point of the lance when the bull charges the horse. This is a dangerous exercise, for often a strong bull will toss the horse and rider, and the picador, who wears heavy steel plates on his legs, cannot rise quickly from the ground to avoid a charge. But when this happens it is very interesting to see how the other men with the capes come quickly to the rescue, drawing the bull away so the picador will not be gored. Today, as you will see, the sides of the horses are heavily padded to protect them against the bull's horns. For this reason horses are not so often killed as before. But if you watch the men with the capes, you will not think of the horses, which in any case are very old and have not long to live.

"The *banderilleros*, who come next, are very interesting to see. Each one in turn will go to the center of the ring and stand with his arms raised, holding the long darts in his finger tips and calling to the bull like this: 'Hue, hue, Toro!' Then the bull will charge, the *banderillero* will run directly towards him, and at the last moment leap gracefully aside, placing the two darts in the bull's shoulders. The *banderillero* must be very skillful and quick to

achieve this, yet it is not so dangerous as the final turn of the matador.

"We Mexicans say that the last act is the most beautiful and emotional part of the little drama because it is the true test of courage for the man and the beast. Already the bull has gained experience in the ring; he is more wary, more determined, yet the matador must go in very close or he cannot kill the bull with a thrust of the sword.

"Now I must explain to you that with the sword alone the matador could not conquer the bull. It is with the muleta, which is a red cloth attached to a short stick of wood, that he will control the bull and prepare for the death stroke. He must force the bull to charge always at the muleta and follow its movements. It is magnificent to see how still the matador will remain, not moving his feet or body as he brings the bull in so close that the horns will even touch the embroidery on his jacket or breeches. But watch the muleta, see how it controls the bull's head to raise or lower it so the sword may pass over the horns and between the shoulder blades.

"Many times you will think that the matador must surely be gored, but if the bull is good this will not happen. A cowardly bull is very unpleasant to watch, for he will not respond to the movements of the muleta and fight bravely. He will not continue to charge straight because he is afraid, then he is very difficult to kill, and no one can enjoy it. It is sometimes what we call butchery, without grace or beauty. But do not worry. You will not see this, for I have been told that all of the bulls for today are good. And so, ladies and gentlemen, I hope my little explanation of the bullfight has pleased you. Our cars are waiting, and we shall now go to the Plaza de Toros."



THE GOLDEN AGE

by WITTER BYNNER

SEEING her mothers beheaded one by one,
Elizabeth never had daughter, never had son:
Though knowing that an empire goes down,
She let hard diamonds issue in her crown.

Sir Walter Raleigh, likewise ill at ease,
Hoping for diamonds as hard as these,
Accomplished all his manhood, all his power,
In the absurd dimensions of a tower.

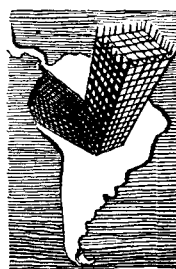
TRAVEL

RAY JOSEPHS spends the greater part of each year in Latin America and is a frequent contributor to Accent on Living.

BUILDING BOOM

by RAY JOSEPHS

THE traveler who ventures into Latin America in search of ancient historic edifices and sleepy cathedrals is due for a surprise. They are still around — but behind so much scaffolding that he can hardly locate them. In the past decade the Good Neighbors have done more building than in the preceding hundred years.



One reason the Latins have been able to exceed the supposedly technique-wise U.S., since the war's end, is that save for the extreme south of Argentina and Chile, temperatures in Latin America are not so cold as here. Buildings are lighter. Central heating is unusual. Cellars are almost unknown. This doesn't mean simple plaster and lath will do. Cuba and the Caribbean are regularly swept by hurricane winds. Chile, Venezuela, and many of the Central American countries have frequent quakes. But reinforced concrete will stand up. And with it Latin America has accomplished important results.

Use of concrete, hollow tile, masonry, and other materials in original ways was dictated by necessity. With an abundance of cement, gravel, and stone — and until recently little locally produced steel — cost and proximity set imaginations working. Hardwoods were employed in startling ways — as bricks, facings, beams, in place of metals. Brazilians found almost a hundred substitutes for imports. Often the items didn't work so well as those made in the U.S.A. Locks, iceboxes, bathroom fixtures, were second or third quality by our standards. Latin America is still unable to make elevators — and I've puffed up many a ten-story building where a hole in the floor holds promise of future mechanical ups and downs. Some buildings collapsed before they were finished, but Latin America continued to build.

Design of homes, offices, and especially of public structures has shown vigor and originality. Bogotá, Colombia, located at 8500 feet in the cloudy Andes, is sunless much of the year. Almost every edifice erected in the last decade has turned to unprecedented use of broad bands or solid walls of glass, drawing in sun for both light and heat.

Rio and most of Brazil have an overabundance of sun. Architects have pioneered with ten- and fifteen-story walls of adjustable louvers of pre-cast,

asbestos cement. These screen out excess light and heat while channeling in every breeze. Unlike many of our shadeless Southern cities, most Latin capitals require planting as part of street and site development. They've also had sidewalks placed under arcaded buildings. Downtown districts in Havana, Santiago, and Buenos Aires are crisscrossed with arcades and galleries. These offer shade as well as protection from short but frequent rains.

Latins also have a stronger sense of drama than we in setting their buildings off. Hollywood bathrooms, streamlined kitchens, and rumpus room gadgetry which run our costs up are simply skipped in favor of ample interior space. Two laps around your room in Buenos Aires's Plaza or Alvear, Rio's Copacabana, or Santiago's Carrera seem practically a mile.

Labor to do the building job has also proved surprisingly ingenious, especially considering the lack of technical schools or competent demonstration. Builders were not called away to war or drawn off by better-paying, wartime factory jobs. Moreover, the Latins were not plagued by the complex craft restrictions and strikes which affected much of our building. Unions in Latin America are strong, and the construction trades, as here, are one of the best organized. But fewer rules are enforced.

In much Latin home construction, the owner often pitches in — or hires himself a foreman and a few assistants, sketches a plan on the back of an old envelope, and finishes the job over a long series of week-ends. In Argentina every completed home calls for an *asado* or barbecue celebration. In Chile you break out with wine. In Brazil, which pioneered the coöperative apartment to solve financing long before it became general here, owners generally participate in a junior version of carnival. The fact that they may have changed five times before the structure was ready does nothing to dampen enthusiasm.

Governments have an important role in Latin housing and building. Chile's Corporación de Fomento (Development Corporation), a federally sponsored but autonomously operated nonprofit agency, devotes half its energies to projects which will aid housing. Chile's progressive program, begun in 1911, is one of the oldest in the Americas. So is that of Uruguay, whose National Mortgage Bank lends workers up to 80 per cent of the cost of land and home, and allows them twenty years to repay at infinitesimal interest.

In Venezuela and several other countries, the Banco Obrero — the semiofficial Worker's Bank — is the chief housing expeditor. Almost all such official or semiofficial projects are self-supporting, but ability to repay is considered secondary.

Most Latin governments have also gone into the related aspects of making land available at low cost, using terrain more advantageously, and tackling the traffic problems involved in rendering the more distant areas easily accessible. Land values have never been as high as in the U.S. Yet municipal, state, and federal authorities have been ruthless in condemning space needed. "If anybody has to be pinched," officials in many countries told me, "it's better that the landowner feel it."

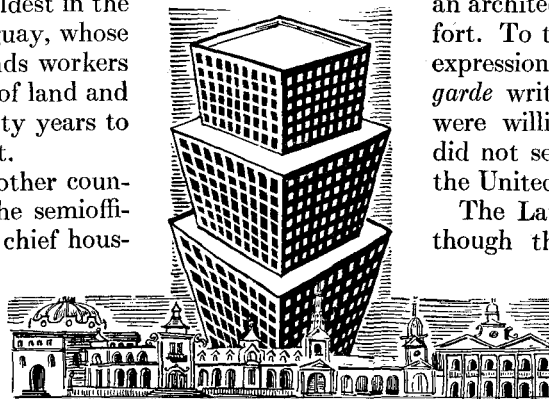
Caracas, capital of Venezuela, recently used the technique for a double purpose. A 22½-acre district of disease-breeding slums, dives, and brothels at the city's most important gate had always been known with characteristic Caraqueño humor as El Silencio because it was anything but. The buildings were completely razed, and on the site Latin America's largest housing project was erected. There are units for four thousand families. Schools, clubs, sports fields, theaters, and a shopping area are designed for needs. Also included is a unique, purely Latin feature — a lottery shop where every week some tenant wins a month's rent.

Such projects, combining housing, health, and education as part of a unified social and economic plan, have reached their culmination in new Latin university building. Both Caracas and Bogotá are erecting vast new university cities. The former has taken a spacious area outside town and has laid out the country's first campus, on which are rising buildings for study and research, housing for professors and undergraduates, and most important, facilities for public use. Bogotá, employing its own architectural school to implement design with an over-all plan drawn by Le Corbusier, is emphasizing normal schools.

Rio's blue and silver skyscraper Ministry of Education offers a foretaste of what Brazil is doing in school building. Built on high columns, it enables you to walk directly from tiled gardens, which extend under the building, into the elevators. The stilt idea has also been employed to overcome difficulties of terrain.

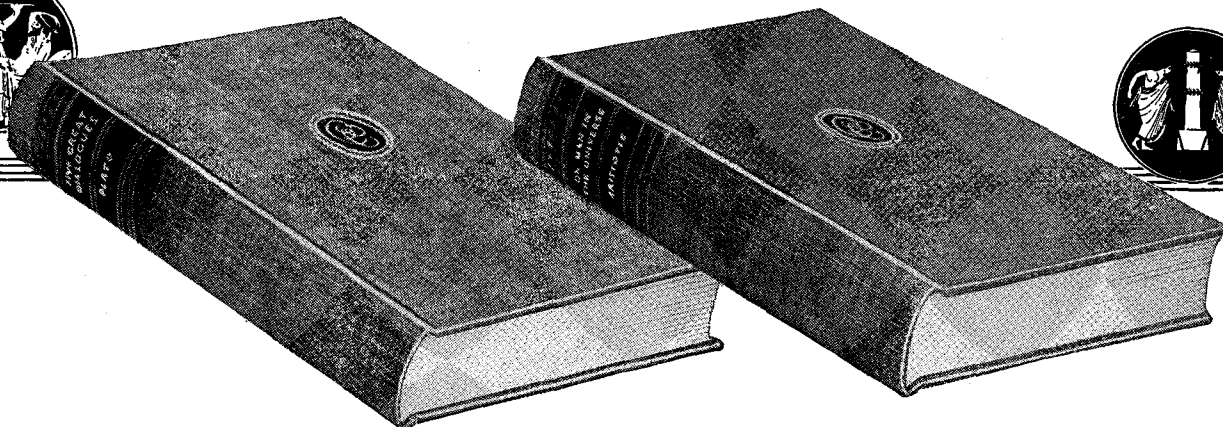
The visitor from north of the border is certain to ask why countries generally regarded as backward have been able to produce so vibrant and up-to-date an architectural concept and building effort. To the Latins, their results are an expression of cultural maturity. *Avant-garde* writers, artists, and intellectuals were willing to accept theories which did not secure a following in Europe or the United States.

The Latins admit, however, that although they have a unique style of architecture, they have to go a long way to achieve the necessary quantity. Two thirds of the people still need better housing.



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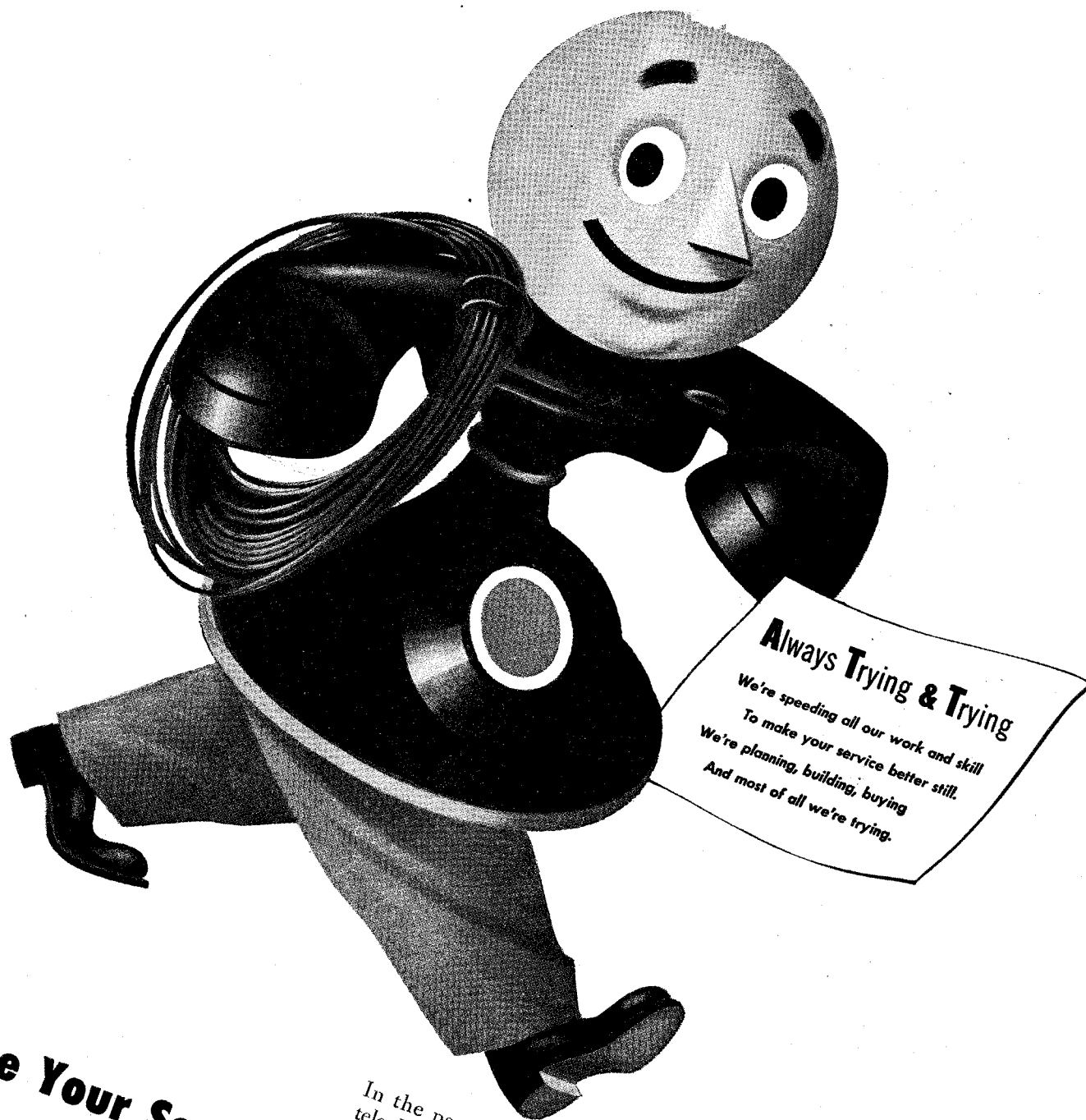
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